

Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता

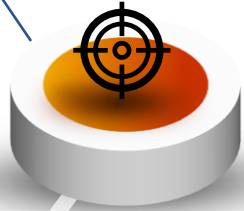


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10 MCQ QUIZ

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

B 25

Who mediated the ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas?

इजरायल और हमास के बीच युद्धविराम समझौते में किसने मध्यस्थता की?

- A. United Nations and Russia / संयुक्त राष्ट्र और रूस
- B. Qatar and the United States / कतर और अमेरिका
- C. European Union and Turkey / यूरोपीय संघ और तुर्की
- D. Saudi Arabia and Egypt / सऊदी अरब और मिस्र

What is India's estimated Real GDP growth for 2024-25?

2024-25 के लिए भारत की अनुमानित वास्तविक GDP वृद्धि क्या है?

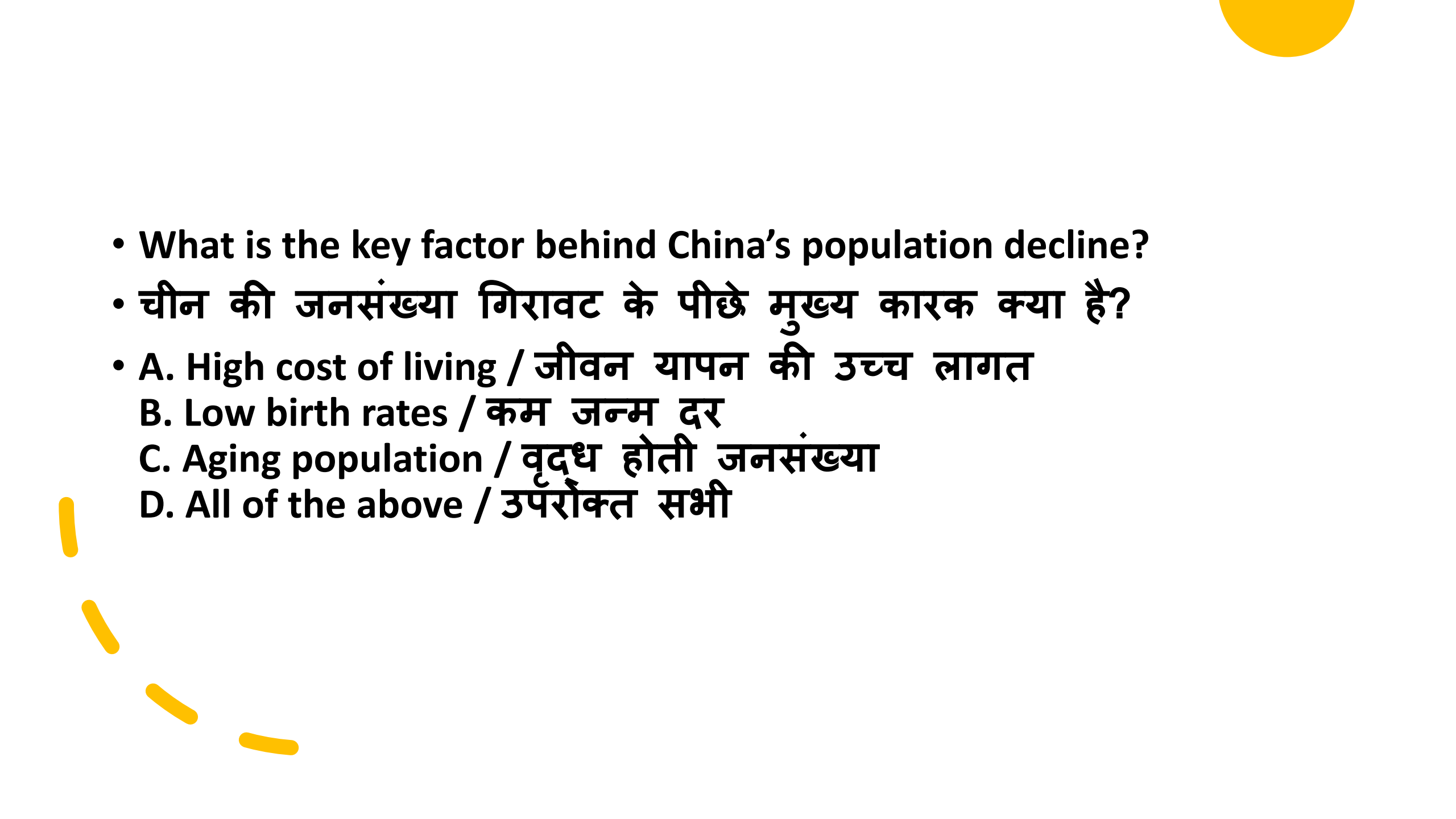
- A. 5.8%
- B. 6.4%
- C. 7.2%
- D. 6.9%

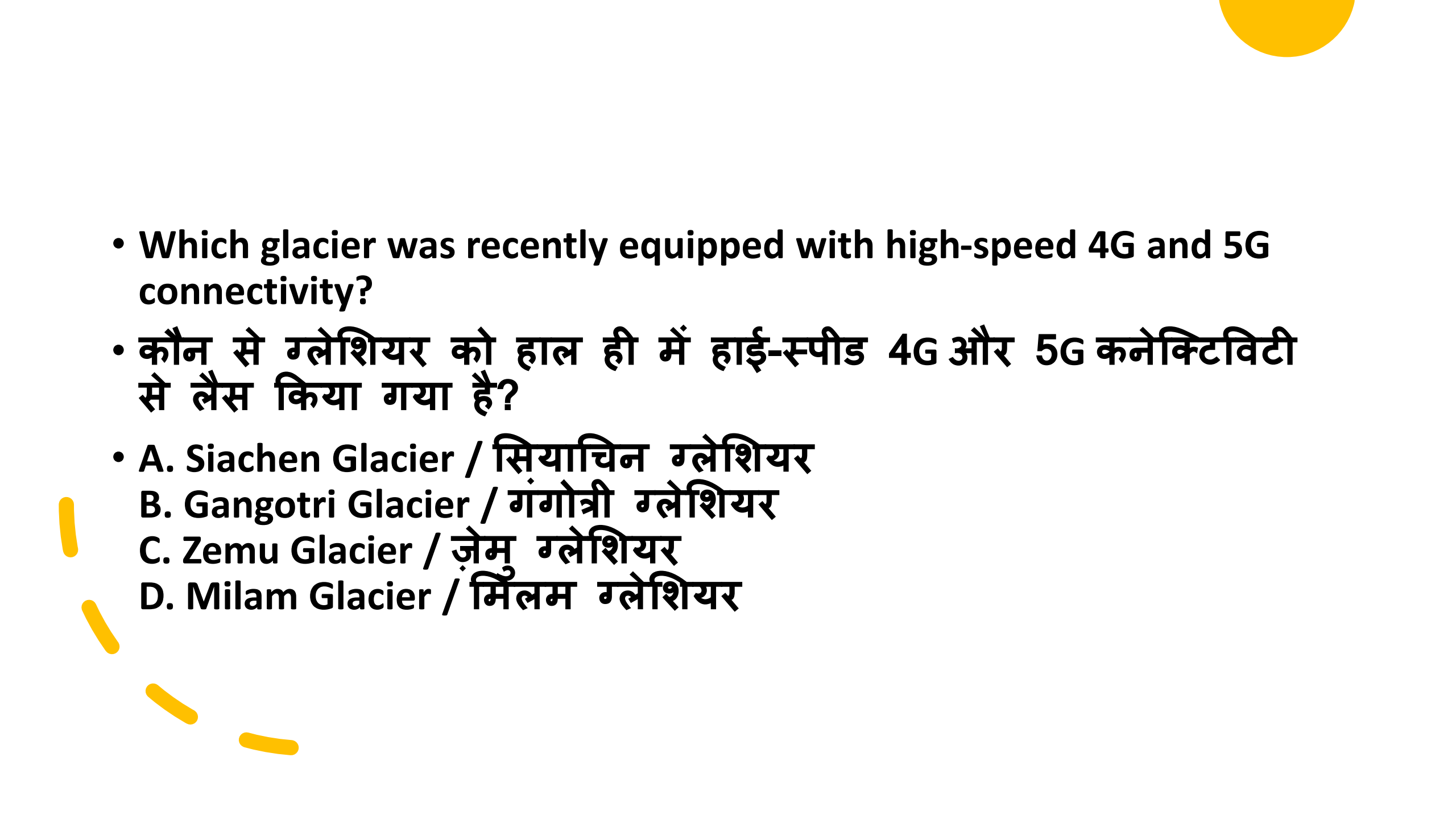
- What is the key reason for the drop in India's manufacturing sector growth in 2024-25?
- 2024-25 में भारत के निर्माण क्षेत्र की वृद्धि में गिरावट का मुख्य कारण क्या है?
- A. Decline in global demand / वैश्विक मांग में गिरावट
B. High interest rates / उच्च ब्याज दरें
C. Reduced government spending / सरकारी खर्च में कमी
D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी


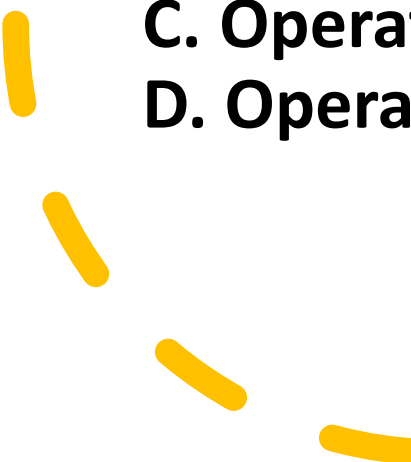


- Which country experienced a third consecutive year of population decline?
- कौन सा देश लगातार तीसरे वर्ष जनसंख्या में गिरावट देख रहा है?
- A. Japan / जापान
B. South Korea / दक्षिण कोरिया
C. China / चीन
D. Germany / जर्मनी





- 
- What is the key factor behind China's population decline?
 - चीन की जनसंख्या गिरावट के पीछे मुख्य कारक क्या है?
 - A. High cost of living / जीवन यापन की उच्च लागत
 - B. Low birth rates / कम जन्म दर
 - C. Aging population / वृद्ध होती जनसंख्या
 - D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी

- 
- Which glacier was recently equipped with high-speed 4G and 5G connectivity?
 - कौन से ग्लेशियर को हाल ही में हाई-स्पीड 4G और 5G कनेक्टिविटी से लैस किया गया है?
 - A. Siachen Glacier / सियाचिन ग्लेशियर
 - B. Gangotri Glacier / गंगोत्री ग्लेशियर
 - C. Zemu Glacier / जेम ग्लेशियर
 - D. Milam Glacier / मिलम ग्लेशियर

- 
- Under which operation did India take control of the Siachen Glacier?
 - भारत ने किस ऑपरेशन के तहत सियाचिन ग्लेशियर पर नियंत्रण प्राप्त किया?
 - A. Operation Vijay / ऑपरेशन विजय
 - B. Operation Meghdoot / ऑपरेशन मेघदूत
 - C. Operation Parakram / ऑपरेशन पराक्रम
 - D. Operation Cactus / ऑपरेशन कैक्टस
- 

- **What is the significance of the Kampala Declaration?**
- **काम्पाला घोषणा पत्र का महत्व क्या है?**
- **A. Focuses on Africa's agricultural transformation / अफ्रीका के कृषि परिवर्तन पर केंद्रित**
- **B. Supports space research and innovation / अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान और नवाचार का समर्थन करता है**
- **C. Addresses global climate change policies / वैश्विक जलवायु परिवर्तन नीतियों को संबोधित करता है**
- **D. Establishes a trade agreement between African nations / अफ्रीकी देशों के बीच व्यापार समझौता स्थापित करता है**

- 
- Where is the world's largest book located?
 - दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी किताब कहां स्थित है?
 - A. India / भारत
 - B. Myanmar / म्यांमार
 - C. China / चीन
 - D. Sri Lanka / श्रीलंका
- 

- *“The purpose of life is not only to be happy.*
- *It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.”* – Bhunesh

Our prime purpose in this life is to **help others**.
And if you can't help them, **at least don't hurt them.**



IN BRIEF



Rajnath visits Maha Kumbh, takes holy dip at Sangam

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday participated in the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. He offered prayers and performed a Ganga Aarti. Mr. Singh, a native of Uttar Pradesh, was accompanied by BJP Rajya Sabha member Sudharshu Trivedi and other party leaders. The defence Minister began his visit with a holy dip in the sacred waters of the Triveni Sangam — confluence of the rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and the mythological Saraswati. He also performed rituals at neighbouring holy sites such as Akshaya Vat, Patilpuri Temple, Saraswati Kund, and Hanuman Temple.

Former MLA Moyong to be Arunachal BJP president

Former MLA Kaling Moyong has been appointed as the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party's Arunachal Pradesh unit. He took over from the State's Water Resources Minister Bhuburam Wahge. The decision to appoint Mr. Moyong, a two-time legislator who joined the BJP in 2012, was finalised on Saturday after a series of high-level meetings in the State's economic hub and New Delhi. "We are confident that Kaling Moyong, a dedicated party worker, will make BJP stronger in Arunachal Pradesh," Mr. Soibam, who supervised the change of guard, said. He also lauded Mr. Wahge for guiding the party through simultaneous elections in 2024.

Maharashtra forms panels to safeguard ancient forts

Purnima Sah MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government on Saturday announced the formation of district-level committees to safeguard ancient forts in the State from encroachment. State Cultural Affairs Minister Ashish Shelar said the decision will not only help in removing illegal encroachments, but also work towards preventing further encroachments on forts across the State. "Maharashtra is home to 47 centrally-protected forts, under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), and 62 State-protected forts, managed by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums. These forts are a vital part of the State's cultural legacy and require robust measures to ensure their conservation and preservation and to prevent encroachments on these forts," the Minister said.

There are serious concerns about structural integrity, historical significance, and law and order at these sites. Under the directives of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, district-level committees will be established to address these issues and uphold law and order at these historic sites, Mr. Shelar said. The panels should prepare a detailed list of encroachments and submit it to the government by January 31, Mr. Shelar said. From February 1 to May 31, the task of removing encroachments must be undertaken, he added.

After the removal of encroachments, the committees must implement measures to ensure that no future encroachments take place on these forts. To maintain accountability and preservation, a task force committee must hold monthly meetings to review progress and submit its report to the government, the Minister added.

Modi distributes 65 lakh property cards across 12 States, Union Territories

SVAMITVA scheme will unlock economic activities worth over ₹100 lakh crore; worst sufferers of property issues were Dalits, backward classes, tribals; previous govts. did nothing to address it: PM

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday distributed more than 65 lakh property cards to rural families in more than 50,000 villages across 12 States and Union Territories under the Centre's SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) scheme. He said rural digitisation was now "furthering rural empowerment by leveraging the power of technology and good governance".

The SVAMITVA scheme was launched in 2020 to provide "Record of Rights" to families owning houses in villages through surveys using the latest drone technology. The Centre said this was to enhance rural India's economic progress as it would facilitate monetisation of properties and enable institutional credit through bank loans, reduce property-related disputes, facilitate better as-



PM Narendra Modi distributes property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme through videoconferencing in New Delhi on Saturday. AP

essment of properties and property tax in rural areas, and allow comprehensive village-level planning. "Around 2.24 crore beneficiaries in villages will now have SVAMITVA property cards after 65 lakh cards are distributed today," Mr. Modi said, adding that the challenge of property rights was a global one that even the United Nations has recognised. "India was also impacted by this challenge. People in India have property worth lakhs of crores (of rupees), but they did not

have papers for it. There were disputes, properties were snatched, and even banks did not provide loans over it," Mr. Modi said, highlighting that the worst sufferers of these issues were Dalits, backward classes, and tribals. "Previous governments should have taken steps to do something about it, but nothing much was done," the PM added.

He also credited the Bhū-Aadhaar system for empowering rural India, with around 23 crore such identification numbers issued so far, making it easy to identify land plots.

The beneficiaries who received their property cards on Saturday included people from the States of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, and from the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

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Haryana Minister Vij says State BJP chief Badoli should quit

Press Trust of India CHANDIGARH

Haryana Minister Anil Vij on Saturday said State BJP chief Mohan Lal Badoli, who was booked in a gang rape case, should resign from the post to maintain the "sanctity" of the party till he is found innocent.

Mr. Badoli and singer Rocky Mittal were booked after a woman alleged that he was raped by them in the hotel in Himachal Pradesh. The police had registered an FIR against them in Kasauli, Solan district, on December 13, 2024.

"Will prove innocence" Mr. Vij said Mr. Badoli has already claimed he is innocent and is confident that he will prove to be innocent in the Himachal Pradesh police's investigation. But until the police proves innocent, he should resign to maintain "sanctity" of the party," Mr. Vij told mediapersons in Ambala. The Minister on January 15 had said the charges against Mr. Badoli were "very serious" and the party high command would take note of it. Mr. Badoli was appointed State BJP president in July last year. According to the complainant, Mr. Badoli and

Mohan Lal Badoli

Mr. Mittal made videos of the act and threatened to kill her if she disclosed the incident to anyone, the police had said.

After Mr. Badoli met the woman on July 3, 2023, while Mr. Badoli introduced himself as a political leader, Mr. Mittal introduced himself as a singer. Later, the woman and her friend went into a room with the two, who promised to help her get a government job and a chance to feature in a music video, the FIR said. The duo allegedly forced the woman to drink liquor. When she refused, they raped her, she alleged in her complaint.

The police said based on the woman's complaint, the case was registered against the duo under Sections 376D (gang rape) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code.

Kerala Governor's policy address suggests shift in Raj Bhavan-govt. political dynamics

NEWS ANALYSIS

G. Anand THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

New Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar's policy address marked the opening of the budget session of the Assembly on Friday. He appeared to signal an arguably different dynamic in the Raj Bhavan-Legislature government relationship. Mr. Arlekar expressed his concern about the declining share of Union fiscal transfer, tapering of revenue deficit grants, and cessation of GST compensation "without apparent reservations". The government's non-confrontational approach



Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar

also helped. It kept the policy address largely devoid of political statements. The government also appeared to gloss over contentious issues that dominated the State's political narrative, including the Centre's alleged trespasses on fiscal federalism and "infringements" on the authority of provincial governments. Mr. Arlekar followed the script, maintained an official punctilious note, and struck an optimistic tone,

especially regarding the state's future finances. The Governor noted that the government highlighted the fiscal problems plaguing Kerala when the 16th Finance Commission was visited. The State government requested that the Centre take "ameliorative" measures. "We hope for the best," Mr. Arlekar said.

The ruling coalition did not seem to lose sight of the fact that former Governor Arif Mohammed Khan had kept the government on tenterhooks by objecting to some portions of the Centre's policy address, including debatable reflections about federalism, the constitutional bounds of the gubernatorial office, and Centre-State relations. Mr. Arlekar reiterated that the government was "fully committed to

upholding the constitutional values of democracy, secularism, socialism, and federalism". He also broadcast the government's message that the annual Finance Commission would be committed to tangibly improving people's lives.

Focus on govt. approach The Governor's speech reflected the ruling front's socially interventionist approach to governance. He stressed the government's commitment to rehabilitating the families displaced by the Wayanad landslides. He also showcased the State's achievements in improving citizens' quality of life and significant infrastructure developments, including the Vizhinjam port and expediting land acquisition for development of national highways.

The Hindu Bureau CHENNAI

Facing criticism for not meeting people nearly a year after floating a party, the actor-turned-politician K. Vijay will meet villagers project at Parangur on Monday.

Though the actor has been granted permission to visit the Pudukottai district police have said the TVK leader cannot go around the area meeting the police and must only meet those who will assemble in an indoor wedding hall. TVK office-bearers, led by treasurer Venkataraman met Kanchheerparam Disuperintendent of Police K. Shanmugam on Saturday and discussed the modalities for the meeting.

Vijay

The party cadre were asked to choose one of the three places suggested by the police, including the indoor wedding hall at Ekanapuram, to prevent any untoward incident, the police said. The party leaders were asked to ensure that there was no hindrance to traffic and members of the public. Though senior functionaries could attend the meeting with the protesters, outsiders and activists would not be allowed entry, police sources said.

Villagers have been protesting for over 900 days against the acquisition of farmland for Chennai's second airport project

At the meeting, the TVK office-bearers submitted a letter seeking permission for the event. Later, Mr. Venkataraman told protesters that there was no restriction for the visit, and that Vijay's route would be decided on Saturday night or Sunday. The villagers have been protesting for more than 900 days against the acquisition of farmland for the project. Activists have also been against the project as the airport would come up on wetlands.

Karnataka sees sharp rise in snakebite cases, deaths in 2024

Ashish Yasmeen BENGALURU

The recorded cases of snakebite envenoming and deaths in Karnataka have seen a sharp rise to 13,235 bite cases and 101 deaths in 2024 from 6,399 bite cases and 19 deaths in 2023. This follows Karnataka's declaration of snakebite envenoming cases and deaths notifiable under the Karnataka Epidemic Diseases Act, 2020, in 2024. While a total of 3,439 cases and 37 deaths were recorded by the Health Department in 2023, this year so far from January 1 to 18, there have been 415 cases and three deaths. The highest number of snakebite cases was reported in the Ballari district, followed by 813 and 790 cases, respectively. The

highest number of snakebite deaths was recorded in Tumakuru (nine), followed by Koppal and Kalaburagi (eight each) and Shikharpet (six each), according to data from the State's Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) portal.

Improved surveillance Attributing the rise in the cases to improved reporting by hospitals, Anzar Ahmed, State Project Director, Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), said making snakebites notifiable had led to better surveillance. "It has resulted in better monitoring, response, and mitigation measures," he said. A total of 217 species were documented during the survey, including 11 new species, thereby increasing the bird popula-

Survey adds 24 new species to Munnar's faunal stock

The Hindu Bureau THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A faunal survey in the Munnar Wildlife Division has led to the addition of 24 new species of birds, butterflies, and odonates to its checklist. The exercise, undertaken by the Forest Department in association with the Travancore Nature History Society, simultaneously surveyed the Marthikottan Shola National Park (MSNP), Pamadum Shola National Park (PSNP), Anamalai Shola National Park (ANP), Karinjilanku Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS), Eravikulam National Park (ENP), and Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) from January 8 to 12. The area, lying between 500 and 2,800 feet in elevation, was surveyed by 21 teams comprising 79 delegates.

A total of 217 species were documented during the survey, including 11 new species, thereby increasing the bird popula-



New additions: Anamalai Sholabird, Red-disc Bushbrown and Red-veined darter. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tion in the Munnar Wildlife Division to 258. The additions include the Great Horned Owl, Barred Button-quail, Spotted Owlet, Moorhobby, Blue-winged Kingfisher, Red Munia (Red-winged Parula), Pinnacled Noddy, Golden-headed Cuckoo, Large Grey Warbler, and Pinnacled Noddy. Other species spotted included the Nilgiri Wood Pigeon, Mountain quail, Great Eared Nightjar, Steepe Eagle, Bonelli's Eagle, Montagu's Harrier, Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Lesser Fish Eagle, Common Noddy, Indian Eagle Owl, Spot-bellied Woodpecker, Great Hornbill, and Mathildan Kingfisher.

PSNP recorded 84 species, PSNP recorded 72, ANP 53, KWS 68, ENP 115, and CWS 160 species. Munnar continues to be home to several species of butterflies, including 160 new records, including eight new records, bringing the

checklist to 246 species. The highest number of butterflies was recorded at Chinnar with 148 species, followed by Eravikulam (79), PSNP (78), and Mathildan Shola (57) species.

In addition to these, the researchers documented mammals such as the Nilgiri tahr, tiger, leopard, four Nilgiri martens, gaurs, elephants and 12 species of reptiles and amphibians. The survey was formally launched by Harkrishnan K.V., Wildlife Warden, Munnar Wildlife Division.

Modi distributes 65 lakh property cards across 12 States, Union Territories

SVAMITVA scheme will 'unlock economic activities worth over ₹100 lakh crore'; worst sufferers of property issues were Dalits, backward classes, tribals; previous govts. did nothing to address it: PM

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

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The SVAMITVA scheme was launched in 2020 to provide 'Record of Rights' to families owning houses in villages through surveys using the latest drone technology. The Centre said this was to enhance rural India's economic progress as it would facilitate monetisation of properties and enable institutional credit through bank loans, reduce property-related disputes, facilitate better as-



PM Narendra Modi distributes property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme through videoconferencing in New Delhi on Saturday. ANI

essment of properties and property tax in rural areas, and allow comprehensive village-level planning.

"Around 2.24 crore beneficiaries in villages will now have SVAMITVA property cards after 65 lakh cards are distributed today," Mr. Modi said, adding that the challenge of property rights was a global one that even the United Nations has recognised.

"India was also impacted by this challenge. People in villages have property worth lakhs of crores (of rupees), but they did not

they had now come on to the path of financial security because of the scheme.

'Will add capital'

Speaking on the potential of the scheme once it achieves its objective of issuing property cards in all villages, the Prime Minister said it would unlock economic activities worth more than ₹100 lakh crore in the coming years and added that substantial capital would then be added to the country's economy.

He also credited the Bhū-Aadhaar system for empowering rural India, with around 23 crore such identification numbers issued so far, making it easy to identify land plots.

The beneficiaries who received their property cards on Saturday included people from the States of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, and from the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

have papers for it. There were disputes, properties were snatched, and even banks did not provide loans over it," Mr. Modi said, highlighting that the worst sufferers of these issues were Dalits, backward classes, and tribals.

"Previous governments should have taken steps to do something about it, but nothing much was done," the PM added.

Just before his address and the distribution of property cards, the Prime Minister also interacted with select beneficiaries of the scheme. Mr. Modi said

SVAMITVA Scheme



Why in the News?

- **India plans to prepare digital maps** of all its **6,00,000 villages** and **pan-India 3D maps** will be prepared for **100 cities**.

About SVAMITVA Scheme



- **SVAMITVA** stand for - **Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas**
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj**. It is a collaborative effort of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State Panchayati Raj Departments, State Revenue Departments and Survey of India**.
- It was nation-wide launched on **National Panchayati Raj Day, 24th April 2021**.
- This Scheme is a reformative step towards establishment of **clear ownership of property in rural inhabited areas**. It does so by:
 1. **Mapping of land parcels** using **drone technology**
 2. Providing '**Record of Rights**' to village household owners with issuance of **legal ownership cards (Property cards/Title deeds)** to the **property owners**.

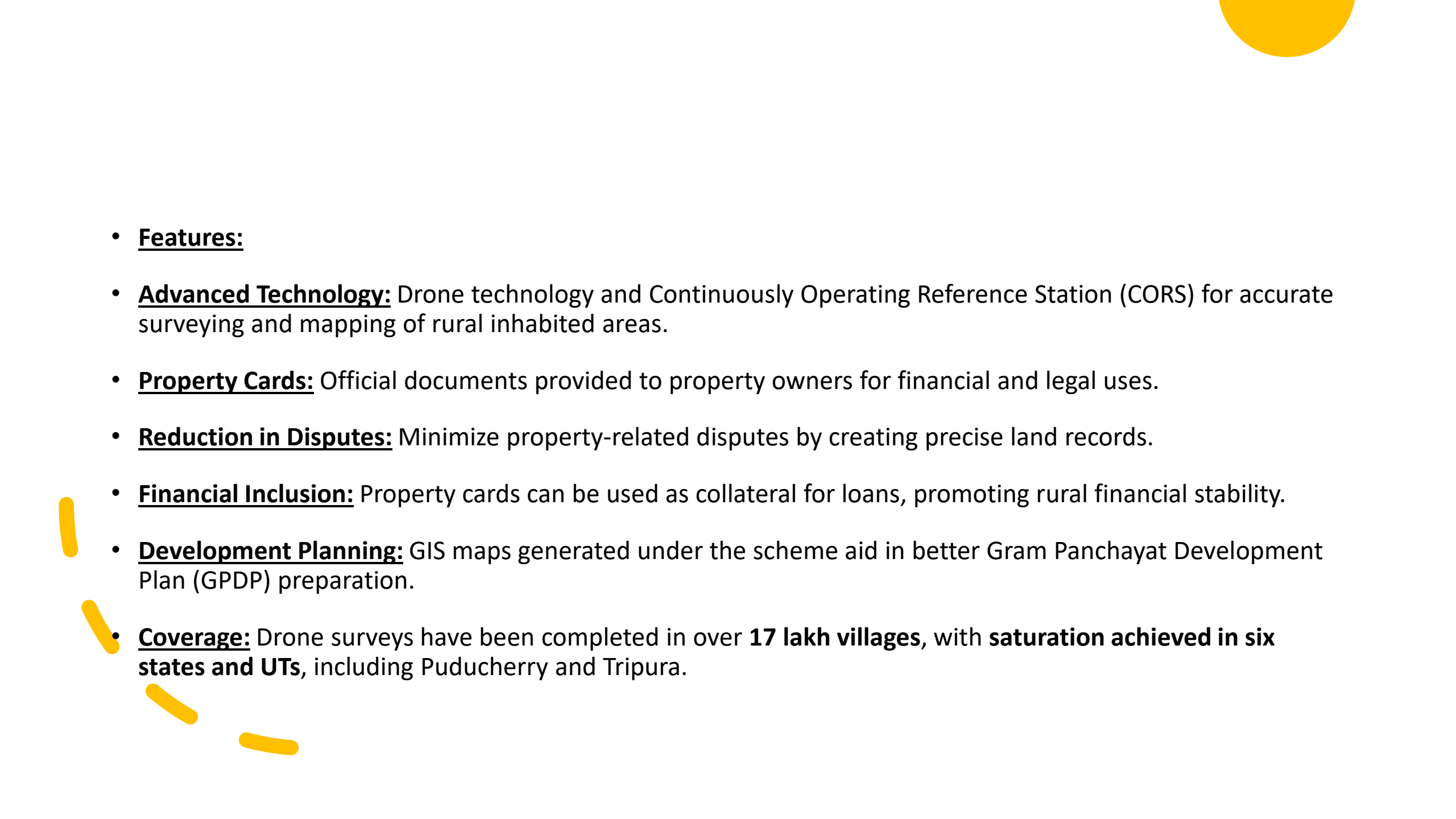
About SVAMITVA Scheme:


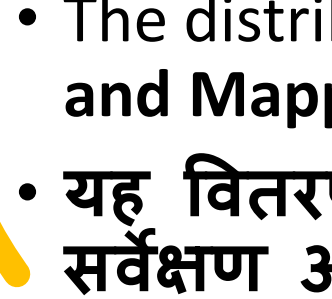
Full Form: Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas.

Launched: In 2020 as a Central Sector Scheme.






Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR).






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- Aim:
 - To empower rural property owners by providing Record of Rights for properties.
 - Facilitate the economic growth of rural India by enabling property monetization and access to financial resources.
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- **Features:**
 - **Advanced Technology:** Drone technology and Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS) for accurate surveying and mapping of rural inhabited areas.
 - **Property Cards:** Official documents provided to property owners for financial and legal uses.
 - **Reduction in Disputes:** Minimize property-related disputes by creating precise land records.
 - **Financial Inclusion:** Property cards can be used as collateral for loans, promoting rural financial stability.
 - **Development Planning:** GIS maps generated under the scheme aid in better Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) preparation.
 - **Coverage:** Drone surveys have been completed in over **17 lakh villages**, with **saturation achieved in six states and UTs**, including Puducherry and Tripura.

- 
- **Distribution of Property Cards / संपत्ति कार्डों का वितरण**
 - **Prime Minister Narendra Modi distributed 65 lakh property cards to rural families in over 50,000 villages across 12 States and Union Territories.**
 - **प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने 12 राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों के 50,000 से अधिक गांवों में 65 लाख संपत्ति कार्ड वितरित किए।**
 - **The distribution was carried out under the SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) scheme.**
 - **यह वितरण 'स्वामित्व योजना' के तहत किया गया, जो गांवों में डिजिटल सर्वेक्षण और संपत्ति के अधिकार को मान्यता प्रदान करती है।**
- 

- **Objective and Economic Impact / उद्देश्य और आर्थिक प्रभाव**
- The scheme was launched in **2020** to **record property rights** of families living in **villages through digital surveys** using the latest technology.
- इस योजना को **2020** में ग्रामीण परिवारों की संपत्ति के अधिकारों को डिजिटल सर्वेक्षण के माध्यम से रिकॉर्ड करने के लिए शुरू किया गया था।
- The goal is to **enhance rural India's economic progress** by enabling institutional credit access through property-linked bank loans.
- इस योजना का उद्देश्य ग्रामीण भारत में आर्थिक प्रगति को बढ़ावा देना और संपत्ति-आधारित बैंक ऋण के माध्यम से वित्तीय पहुंच को आसान बनाना है।
- PM Modi stated that unlocking economic activities through property rights would lead to ₹100 lakh crore worth of financial benefits.
- प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने कहा कि संपत्ति के अधिकारों को मान्यता देने से भविष्य में ₹100 लाख करोड़ मूल्य की आर्थिक गतिविधियों को गति मिलेगी।

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- **3. Social Impact and Challenges / सामाजिक प्रभाव और चुनौतियां**
 - **Historically, Dalits, backward classes, and tribal communities** have suffered the most from **property disputes and lack of land rights.**
 - ऐतिहासिक रूप से, दलित, पिछड़े वर्ग और आदिवासी समुदाय संपत्ति विवादों और भूमि अधिकारों की कमी से सबसे अधिक प्रभावित हुए हैं।
 - Many villagers possess **property worth crores but lacked legal ownership**, which prevented them from availing **bank loans.**
 - कई ग्रामीणों के पास करोड़ों की संपत्ति थी, लेकिन कानूनी स्वामित्व नहीं होने के कारण वे बैंक ऋण लेने में असमर्थ थे।
 - **PM Modi criticized previous governments for not addressing the property rights issue effectively.**
 - प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने पिछली सरकारों की आलोचना की कि उन्होंने संपत्ति अधिकारों के मुद्दे को प्रभावी रूप से हल नहीं किया।
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- **4. Technological Integration and Aadhaar Linkage / तकनीकी समावेश और आधार लिंक**
 - **PM Modi credited the Aadhaar system for facilitating financial inclusion in rural India.**
 - **प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने ग्रामीण भारत में वित्तीय समावेशन को सुगम बनाने के लिए आधार प्रणाली की प्रशंसा की।**
 - **23 crore digital identification numbers have been issued under Aadhaar, making it easier to verify property ownership and access financial services.**
 - **आधार के तहत अब तक 23 करोड़ डिजिटल पहचान संख्या जारी की जा चुकी है, जिससे संपत्ति स्वामित्व की पहचान करना और वित्तीय सेवाओं तक पहुंच बनाना आसान हो गया है।**
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BEIRUT
Hezbollah chief warns Israel over 'hundreds' of truce violations



Naim Qassem, the leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah, on Saturday accused Israel of hundreds of violations of a ceasefire, to be fully implemented by next week, and warned against testing "our patience". His remarks came during a visit to Beirut by United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. **AP**

TEHRAN
Gunman kills two judges in Tehran tied to 1988 mass executions



A man fatally shot two prominent hard-line judges in Iran's capital Saturday, officials said, both of whom allegedly took part in the mass execution of dissidents in 1988. The attacker, who was armed with a handgun, killed himself. The victims were identified as clerics Mohammad Moghiseh and Ali Razini. **AP**

ABUJA
Nigeria is admitted as a partner country of the BRICS bloc



Nigeria has been admitted as a "partner country" of the BRICS bloc of developing economies, according to Brazil, the group's chair. BRICS was formed by Brazil, Russia, India and China in 2009, with South Africa added in 2010, as a counterweight to the Group of Seven (G-7) leading industrialised nations. **AP**

LAHORE
Police, Islamists demolish Ahmadi place of worship in Pakistan



Police and members of the Islamist party Tehreek-e-Labbak Pakistan allegedly demolished an 80-year-old worship place of the minority Ahmadi community in Pakistan's Punjab province, an official said on Saturday. The incident took place on Friday at Daska Bahar, Sialkot, some 100 km from Lahore. **PTI**

Before ceasefire takes effect in Gaza, Yemen's Houthis fire missiles at Israel

The militants 'carried out a specific military operation targeting the Ministry of Defence of the Israeli enemy'; the cease fire deal between Israel and Hamas is to take effect on the eve of Trump's inauguration for a second term as U.S. President

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

The Israeli military said it intercepted two missiles fired from Yemen on Saturday, a day before a ceasefire is set to take effect in war-battered Gaza.

The military activated air raid sirens in Jerusalem and in parts of central and southern Israel ahead of the interceptions during the day, with the Israeli air force firing a missile in the practice shot down in the morning.

Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed the morning attack, hours after the Israeli military intercepted the incoming missile. The Houthis "carried



Tense regions: Israeli armoured personnel carriers park near the Israeli-Gaza border on Saturday, before the ceasefire deal. **REUTERS**

out a specific military operation targeting the so-called Ministry of Defence of the Israeli enemy... using a ballistic missile" in central Israel, the rebels said in a statement.

from Yemen and intercepted by the Israeli air force, the military said.

"Following the sirens that sounded a short while ago in the areas of Galil and Arava, a missile that was launched from Yemen was intercepted" before crossing into Israeli territory, it said.

The latest launches from Yemen came as a ceasefire in the war in Gaza would take effect from 06:00 GMT (2:00 IST) on Sunday.

Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, announcing the ceasefire agreement on Wednesday, said an initial 42-day ceasefire would see

33 hostages released by militants in Gaza.

The truce is to take effect on the eve of Donald Trump's inauguration for a second term as U.S. President.

"Ready for duties" Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said the Palestinian Authority, which has partial administrative control in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, has completed preparations to assume full responsibility in Gaza after the war.

Israel has no definitive stance on post-war governance beyond rejecting any role for both Hamas and the Palestinian Authority.

Escaped death by a whisker, says Hasina on fleeing Dhaka

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Deposed Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said she and her younger sister Sheikh Rehana escaped death by just 20-25 minutes on August 5 last year when her Awami League government was toppled in a student-led mass uprising.

In a brief audio note released by her party on its Facebook page, Ms. Hasina expressed her gratitude to God for saving her life. She also recalled two previous attempts on her life she narrowly escaped and said she believed that God had saved her life as part of a divine design to get something greater done by her.

"We escaped death by just 20-25 minutes. I feel surviving the killings on



Sheikh Hasina

August 21, surviving the large bomb in Kotailpara, or surviving on August 5, God for saving her life. There must be a will of Allah, the hand of Allah. Otherwise, I would not have survived this time," she is heard saying in Bangla in the audio clip.

In a trembling voice, the 77-year-old leader accused her political opponents of conspiring to get her killed.

Ms. Hasina has been living in India since August 5

last year when she fled Bangladesh following a massive student-led protest that toppled her Awami League's 16-year regime.

"I am suffering. I am without my country, my home, everything has been burned," Ms. Hasina said.

Ms. Hasina survived several attempts on her life including that of the August 21, 2004 grenade attack on a party rally where she was addressing as the opposition leader. Twenty-four people were killed in the attack.

In 2000, Ms. Hasina, then the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, was scheduled to speak at a rally in Kotailpara Upazila, Gopalganj district when police discovered a time bomb weighing 76 Kg 50 feet from the stage.

Slow life



Two vendors play chess while waiting for customers on a street market in Indonesia's Jakarta on Saturday. **AP**

'Russia captures two more villages in eastern Ukraine'

Agence France-Presse
Associated Press
MOSCOW

Russia on Saturday said it had captured two more villages in eastern Ukraine, the latest territorial advances in its grinding offensive.

In a statement on Telegram, the Defence Ministry said its forces had "liberated" the villages of Vremivka and Petropavlivka, both in the Donetsk region that Moscow claims to have annexed.

Drone attack on Kyiv Meanwhile, Russia attacked Ukraine's capital with a barrage of drones and missiles on Saturday, leaving at least three people dead, while industrial sites in Russia were set ablaze by Ukrainian strikes.

Russia launched 39



Incremental gains: Kremlin claimed to have seized two villages in the Donetsk region that Moscow claims to have annexed. **AP**

Shahed drones, other similar drones and four ballistic missiles in the early hours of Saturday morning, according to Ukraine's Air Force.

The office of Ukraine's general prosecutor said in a statement that the casualties included a security guard at a food establishment and people who

were in a minibus on the street.

Elsewhere, industrial sites in Russia's Kaluga and Tula regions were set ablaze by Ukrainian drone attacks, local officials said Saturday. Russia's Defence Ministry said that 46 Ukrainian drones had been destroyed across the country overnight.

'Germany may send troops to Ukraine buffer zone'

Agence France-Presse
BERLIN

Germany's Defence Minister said he was open to sending German soldiers to Ukraine to help secure a demilitarised zone there if a ceasefire were agreed with Russia, in remarks published on Saturday.

In an interview with the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper, Boris Pistorius also said Germany should aim to spend around 3% of GDP on defence.

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump wants members of the NATO military alliance to devote 5% of their national output on defence, a demand that has already been rejected as too high by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

Asked about a possible deployment of German troops to help secure a buffer zone between Russia and Ukraine if one were agreed, Mr. Pistorius said: "We are the largest NATO partner in Europe. We will obviously have a role to play."

He said the issue would "be discussed in due time".

Mr. Pistorius said Russia was currently occupying "18% or 19% of Ukrainian territory". But despite nearly three years of war, it had "not gained more" than that and had suffered "extensive losses in its own army" in the attempt.

Defence spending Asked about the contribution Germany should make towards NATO defence spending, Mr. Pistorius said: "We should be talking more about 3% than 2%."

Germany currently devotes around 2% of its GDP to defence.

Impeached South Korean leader argues for his release in court

Associated Press
SEOUL

South Korea's impeached President on Saturday argued for his release before a Seoul judge as the court reviewed whether to grant a law enforcement request for his formal arrest.

Mr. Yoon, who has been in detention since he was apprehended on Wednesday in a massive law enforcement operation at his residence, faces potential rebellion charges linked to his declaration of martial law on December 3, which set off the country's most serious political crisis since its democratisation in the



Yoon Suk Yeol

late 1980s. The Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials, which is leading a joint investigation with the police and the military, requested the Seoul Western District Court to grant a warrant

for Mr. Yoon's formal arrest. Mr. Yoon's lawyers said he spoke for about 40 minutes to the judge during the nearly five-hour closed-door hearing.

Expected decision The judge is expected to make a decision by late Saturday or early Sunday.

If Mr. Yoon is arrested, investigators can extend his detention to 20 days, during which they will transfer the case to public prosecutors for indictment. If the court rejects the investigators' request, Mr. Yoon will be released and return to his residence.

At least 70 people killed in central Nigeria as fuel tanker explodes after flipping over

Agence France-Presse
LAGOS

A fuel tanker exploded after flipping over in central Nigeria on Saturday, killing 70 people who had scrambled to take the fuel, whose price has skyrocketed amid an economic crisis.

The deaths toll stands at 70 so far, Kumar Tsukwan, the head of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Niger State, said while speaking by telephone. Mr. Tsukwan said a truck carrying 60,000 litres of gasoline had an accident around 10:00 a.m.

A large crowd of people gathered to scoop the fuel when suddenly the tanker burst into flames, engulfing another tanker, officials said

(0230 IST) at the Diklo junction on the Kaduna-Kano road, the federal capital Abuja, in the northern city of Kaduna. "Most of the victims were women and children," Mr. Tsukwan said. "We are at the scene to clear things up." An FRSC statement said:

"A large crowd of people gathered to scoop the fuel" when "suddenly the tanker burst into flames, engulfing another tanker."

"So far 60 corpses recovered from scene, the victims are mostly security guards," it said.

Ripple effect Last year, shortly after his election, President Bola Tinubu abolished a fuel subsidy, sending prices of essentials and other goods soaring, triggering protests.

The price of gasoline has increased fivefold in his month, leading many to risk their lives to recover

fuel during tanker truck accidents, which are common in Africa's most populous country.

Niger State Governor Umaru Bago said in a statement that the explosion was "worrisome, heart-breaking and unfortunate."

He said an undisclosed number of people also experienced various degrees of burns. In October, more than 170 people died in a similar incident in Jigawa State, in northern Nigeria. In 2020, the FRSC listed 161 fuel tanker accidents which claimed over 535 lives.


ABUJA

Nigeria is admitted as a partner country of the BRICS bloc



AP

Nigeria has been admitted as a “partner country” of the BRICS bloc of developing economies, according to Brazil, the group’s chair. BRICS was formed by Brazil, Russia, India and China in 2009, with South Africa added in 2010, as a counterweight to the Group of Seven (G-7) leading industrialised nations. AFP

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- A person is holding a globe made of colorful beads. The globe is primarily blue with yellow and green sections. The person is wearing a patterned garment with a yellow and red geometric design. The background is a soft-focus green and white pattern.
- Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. These countries were invited to join at the 15th BRICS Summit in August 2023, and full membership began on January 1, 2024

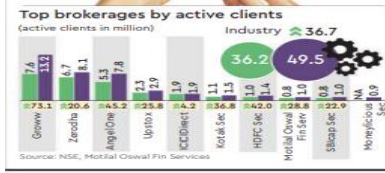
WHAT'S INSIDE

SPOTLIGHT, P5
Relishing Rajasthan
Rajasthan's lure is going beyond havelis and sand dunes to include its vibrant culinary landscape. Apart from the traditional curries and popular hotspots dishing out iconic dishes, the state is also experimenting with ingredients once restricted by climate and availability

LEISURE, P7
New narratives
How documentaries in India are riding on a fresh wave of popularity, piggybacking on compelling issues, honest content & untold stories

NSE's active client base rises 37% to 50 million

NSE'S ACTIVE CLIENT base reached 49.5 million in December 2024, marking a 36.7% rise from 36.2 million in December 2023. In contrast, client numbers grew marginally by 2.5% in 2023. Groww, leading the list with 13.2 million active clients, recorded a 73.1% increase in 2024. Zerodha, ranked second, saw its client base rise by 20.6% to 8.1 million. Angel One's active customer base jumped 65.2% to 7.8 million, securing the third position. The share of top five brokers in the total client base rose to 68.4% in December 2024, up from 65.8% in December 2023.



Sanjay Roy found guilty of RG Kar doc's rape, murder

A KOLKATA COURT on Saturday convicted prime accused Sanjay Roy of raping and murdering an on-duty doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. The court will announce the sentencing on Monday, bringing closure to a case that had shaken the nation. Page 2

TikTok to 'go dark' as it faces US ban

TIKTOK SAID it will 'go dark' on Sunday unless the outgoing Biden government intervenes 'immediately' over the looming ban in the US. Page 16

Namaste Wegovy, Ozempic and tirzepatide

Indian pharma set for shake-up with entry of these drugs
GARIMA SADHWANI New Delhi, January 18
HAVING MADE WAVES the world over, revolutionary anti-obesity drugs Wegovy and Ozempic (manufactured by Danish drugmaker Novo Nordisk) and Eli Lilly's tirzepatide are set to enter the Indian market this year. "We anticipate a positive response from the Indian market," Eli Lilly (India) told FE, as the company gets ready to bring its anti-obesity drug tirzepatide, or Mounjaro, to India this year. The company also said it will price its drug competitively for the Indian market.
Competitor Novo Nordisk had initially planned to bring its Wegovy to India in 2024, but reports say they will likely postpone their arrival to coincide with Eli Lilly, not wanting to miss out on the huge opportunity the Indian market brings. The company declined comment when asked by FE on a possible launch date in India. These drugs have made bank in the West so far, which is what make their entry exciting here as well. In 2023, Novo Nordisk's share price increased by over four times from what it had been just five years ago—and it not only became Europe's most valuable company but also had market capitalisation that was higher than its native country Denmark's GDP. In 2022, over 65% of all drug prescriptions in the US were for Ozempic alone.
In fact, in the second quarter of this financial year, Eli Lilly's Zep bound made \$1.24 billion and Mounjaro made \$3.09 billion, far exceeding expectations.
Continued on Page 2

EXPO SHOWCASES FUTURE OF MOBILITY

Mass car makers also moving into luxury lane

Display cars with premium features, affordable prices
VIKRAM CHAUDHARY New Delhi, January 18
LUXURY CARS ARE no longer beyond the reach of the average Indian consumer. At the ongoing Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 in New Delhi, even mass-market carmakers such as Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Kia and Tata Motors have focused on making their cars as luxurious as possible. Tata Motors, for example, showcased the Avinya X—the first model under Tata's new range of premium EVs, due from 2026 onward. Martin Uhlarik, the global design head of Tata Motors, told FE that the Avinya brand will have multiple models and the focus will be on making these distinct not just from mass-market Tata cars, but every other car in the world. "Avinya will be the finest automotive art pieces in the world, and not just metal on wheels," he said. While models under the Avinya brand will be costlier than Tata cars, these won't be prohibitively expensive, out of reach of the average Indian buyer, another Tata executive told FE. Similarly, Hyundai Creta Electric gets most features from luxury cars, including eight-way powered seats, a huge central touchscreen, touch-based climate control, big panoramic glass roof, and ADAS. Tata Motors showcases Avinya X, the first model under its new range of premium EVs. Tata Motors showcases Avinya X, the first model under its new range of premium EVs. Tata Motors showcases Avinya X, the first model under its new range of premium EVs.
Continued on Page 2

Kotak Mahindra Bank net up 10%

A CAMELID SALUTE
SACHIN KUMAR Mumbai, January 18
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK on Saturday reported a 10% year-on-year rise in net profit to ₹3,305 crore in the third quarter of the current financial year, supported by strong loan growth. The lender's bottom line was slightly below expectations, as Bloomberg analysts expected the bank to post ₹3,338 crore net profit in the quarter. Net interest income, the difference between interest earned and paid, rose 10% to ₹7,196 crore in the December quarter from ₹6,554 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal. The management expects stress in microfinance loans to ease in the coming months.
Continued on Page 2

LA fires cast shadow on 'no-build' 2028 Olympics

TESTING TIMES
Los Angeles was awarded 2028 Olympics for third time in 2017
Organisers were praised for bid to reuse existing venues rather than new ones
Pacific Palisades on the city's westside and Altadena, an unincorporated community above Pasadena in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. The Palisades fire came close to Riviera Country Club, which will host Olympic golf and was inside the evacuation zone. UCLA, which will house athletes, was just outside the zone. "While our focus remains on healing and rebuilding, there is no reason to believe that the fires will adversely impact or delay preparations for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which are already well underway," Paul Krizan, executive director of the city's Office of Major Events, said in a statement. The NFL, NBA and college basketball relocated or postponed games in the days after the fires began on January 7. Neither of the two major fires has been contained and thousands remain evacuated. One of the two major fires has been contained and thousands remain evacuated. One of the two major fires has been contained and thousands remain evacuated.
Continued on Page 2

Corrections in EPFO portal, account transfers simplified

EASING THE BURDEN
PRIYANSH VERMA New Delhi, January 18
IN A BID to ease the burden of subscribers, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has simplified the process of correcting any member's personal details on the EPF portal, and eased the way through which PF accounts are transferred during change of job. Sources said EPF members with fully compliant KYC accounts can file their online transfer claims now with Aadhaar OTP directly with EPFO without any need for inter-employer verification. Earlier, any online request for transfer of PF account in case of any change of job had to be verified by the employer before submitting to EPFO. The verification by the employer took about two weeks, which delayed the process. During the past nine months, almost 2 million claims remained pending with employers for more than 15 days, said the sources. "If the number of claims filed (1.3 million) during FY25 is considered, more than 90% claims will instantly reach EPFO," an official said. The turnaround time of transfer claim processing will be considerably reduced since it does not require approval by the employer. Moreover, if any member has already filed his transfer claim
Continued on Page 2

Israel-Hamas ceasefire at 0630 GMT

QATAR'S FOREIGN MINISTRY said the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas will go into effect at 0630 GMT on Sunday, reports AP. The ceasefire will pause the fighting after 15 months of war and see the release of dozens of hostages held by militants in the Gaza Strip and hundreds of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. Israel's cabinet approved the deal early on Saturday, backed by mediators—United States, Qatar and Egypt—in months of indirect talks between the warring sides. The ceasefire is the second truce achieved in the devastating conflict
Full report on Page 16

Namaste Wegovy, Ozempic and tirzepatide

● Indian pharma set for shake-up with entry of these drugs

GARIMA SADHWANI
New Delhi, January 18

HAVING MADE WAVES the world over, revolutionary anti-obesity drugs Wegovy and Ozempic (manufactured by Danish drugmaker Novo Nordisk), and Eli Lilly's tirzepatide are set to enter the Indian market this year. "We anticipate a positive response from the Indian market," Eli Lilly (India) told *FE*, as the company

WEIGHT AND WATCH

■ Cipla coming up with generic, affordable version of Wegovy; eyeing deal with Eli Lilly to market drug in India

■ Sun Pharma working on anti-obesity drug utregrlutide

■ Dr Reddy's Laboratories also coming up with generic version of Wegovy



■ Biocon working on GLP-1 therapies, gets approval for liraglutide

■ Natco Pharma developing generic version of Ozempic

gets ready to bring its anti-obesity drug tirzepatide, or Mounjaro, to India this year. The company also said it will price its drug competitively for the Indian market.

Competitor Novo Nordisk had initially planned to bring its Wegovy to India in 2026, but reports say they will likely pre-poned their arrival to coincide with Eli Lilly, not wanting to

miss out on the huge opportunity the Indian market brings. The company declined to comment when asked by *FE* on a possible launch date in India.

These drugs have made bank in

the West so far, which is what makes their entry exciting here as well. In 2023, Novo Nordisk's share price increased by over four times from what it had been just five years ago—and it not only became Europe's most valuable company but also had a market capitalisation that was higher than its native country Denmark's GDP. In 2022, over 65% of all drug prescriptions in the US were for Ozempic alone.

In fact, in the second quarter of this financial year, Eli Lilly's Zepbound made \$1.24 billion and Mounjaro made \$3.09 billion, far exceeding expectations.

Continued on Page 2

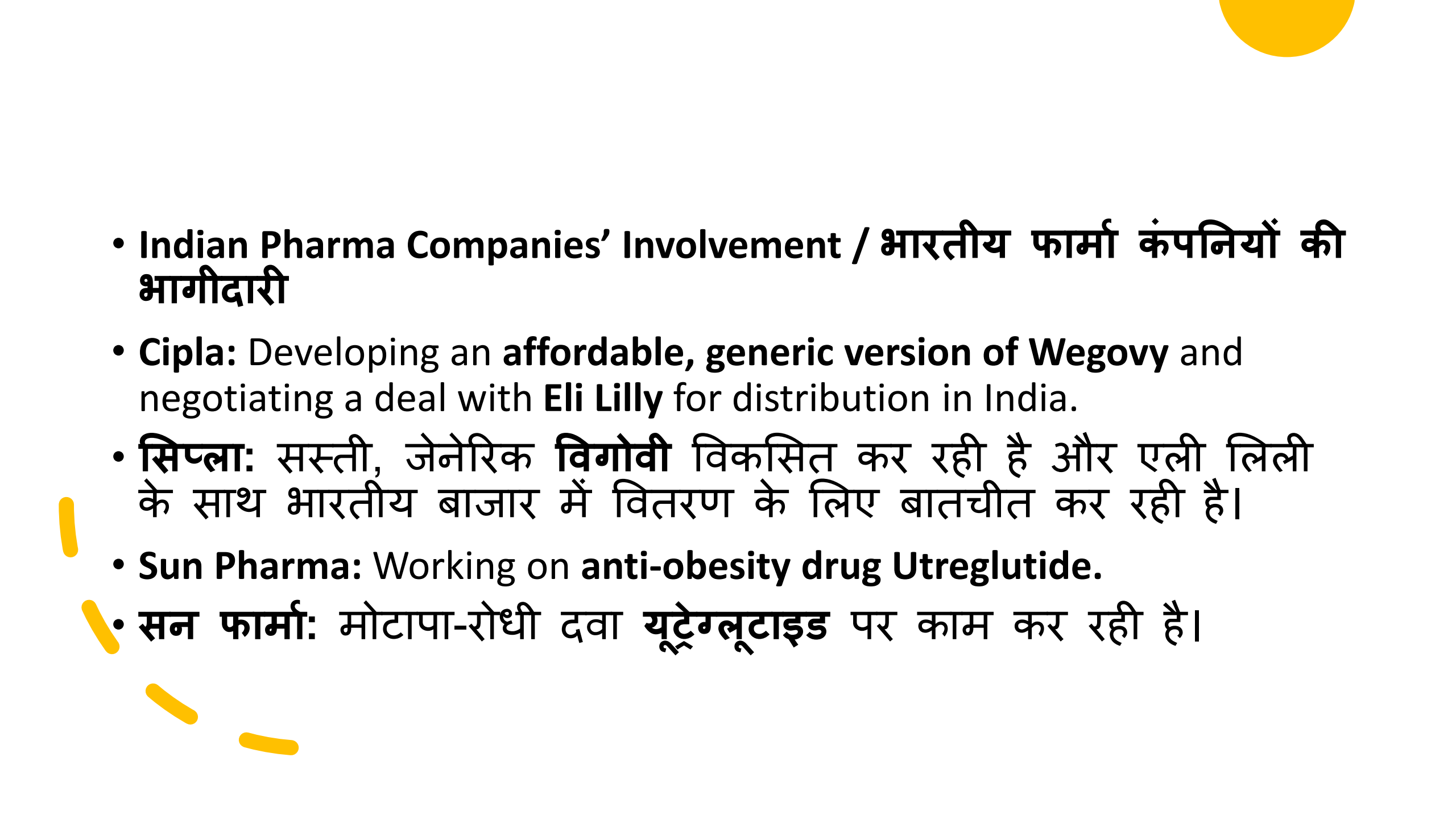
Introduction to Anti-Obesity Drugs / मोटापा-रोधी दवाओं का परिचय

Wegovy and Ozempic (by Novo Nordisk) and Tirzepatide (Mounjaro) (by Eli Lilly) are set to enter the Indian pharmaceutical market in 2024.

विगोवी और ओजेम्पिक (नोवो नॉर्डिस्क) और टिर्जेपाटाइड (मौंजारो, एली लिली) जल्द ही भारतीय दवा बाजार में प्रवेश करने वाली हैं।

These drugs have gained global attention for their effectiveness in weight loss and diabetes management.

ये दवाएं दुनिया भर में वजन घटाने और मधुमेह नियंत्रण के लिए प्रसिद्ध हो चुकी हैं।

- 
- **Indian Pharma Companies' Involvement / भारतीय फार्मा कंपनियों की भागीदारी**
 - **Cipla:** Developing an **affordable, generic version of Wegovy** and negotiating a deal with **Eli Lilly** for distribution in India.
 - **सिप्ला:** सस्ती, जेनेरिक **विगोवी** विकसित कर रही है और एली लिली के साथ भारतीय बाजार में वितरण के लिए बातचीत कर रही है।
 - **Sun Pharma:** Working on **anti-obesity drug Utreglutide**.
 - **सन फार्मा:** मोटापा-रोधी दवा **यूट्रेग्लूटाइड** पर काम कर रही है।

- **Dr. Reddy's Laboratories:** Also developing a **generic version of Wegovy.**
- **डॉ. रेड्डीज लैबोरेट्रीज:** विगोवी की **सस्ती जेनेरिक दवा विकसित कर रही हैं।**
- **Biocon:** Received approval for **GLP-1 therapy Liraglutide.**
- **बायोकाँन:** **GLP-1 थेरेपी लिराग्लूटाइड** के लिए **स्वीकृति प्राप्त हुई।**
- **Natco Pharma:** Working on a **generic version of Ozempic.**
- **नैटको फार्मा:** **ओजेम्पिक** की **जेनेरिक दवा विकसित कर रही हैं।**

- **Market and Economic Impact / बाज़ार और आर्थिक प्रभाव**
- **Novo Nordisk's stock price increased 4x in five years, making it Europe's most valuable company with a market capitalization exceeding Denmark's GDP.**
- **नोवो नॉर्डिस्क के शेयरों में 5 वर्षों में 4 गुना वृद्धि हुई, जिससे यह यूरोप की सबसे मूल्यवान कंपनी बन गई, जिसकी बाज़ार पूंजीकरण डेनमार्क के जीडीपी से भी अधिक हो गई।**
- **In 2022, 65% of US prescriptions for diabetes management were for Ozempic alone.**
- **2022 में, अमेरिका में 65% डायबिटीज़ की दवाओं के पर्चे केवल ओजेम्पिक के लिए थे।**

Eli Lilly's weight loss drugs generated billions in revenue:

- Zepbound (2023 Q2) - \$1.24 billion.
- Mounjaro - \$3.09 billion.

एली लिली की वजन घटाने की दवाओं ने अरबों डॉलर की कमाई की:

- जेपबाउंड (2023 की दूसरी तिमाही) - \$1.24 बिलियन।
- मौंजारो - \$3.09 बिलियन।

4. Competitive Dynamics in India / भारत में प्रतिस्पर्धा

Eli Lilly plans to price Tirzepatide (Mounjaro) competitively to make it affordable for the Indian market.

एली लि्ली टिर्जेपाटाइड (मौंजारो) को भारतीय बाजार के लिए किफायती मूल्य पर लॉन्च करने की योजना बना रही है।

Novo Nordisk initially planned to launch Wegovy in India in 2026, but now it might pre-pone its entry to compete with Eli Lilly.

नोवो नॉर्डिस्क पहले 2026 में विगोवी लॉन्च करने की योजना बना रही थी, लेकिन अब एली लिली से प्रतिस्पर्धा करने के लिए इसे जल्द लॉन्च कर सकती है।

Indian companies are focusing on producing affordable alternatives to counter high costs of original versions.

भारतीय कंपनियां महंगे ब्रांडेड वर्जन का सस्ता विकल्प देने पर ध्यान केंद्रित कर रही हैं।

-
- **Future Prospects and Challenges / भविष्य की संभावनाएं और चुनौतियां**
 - **India's high obesity and diabetes rates create strong demand for these drugs.**
 - **भारत में बढ़ती मोटापा और मधुमेह दर के कारण इन दवाओं की उच्च मांग बनी रहेगी।**
 - **Government regulations and pricing caps could influence sales strategies.**
 - **सरकारी नियम और मूल्य-सीमा बिक्री रणनीतियों को प्रभावित कर सकते हैं।**
 - **Indian pharma firms have the potential to export affordable versions of these drugs globally.**
 - **भारतीय दवा कंपनियां इन दवाओं के सस्ते संस्करणों का वैश्विक निर्यात कर सकती हैं।**

ATTACK ON SAIF
Accused held, to be in custody for five days
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DRAFT AGRI MARKETS POLICY
Kisan Morcha factions to hold protests
STATES » PAGE 2

R.G. KAR CASE
Court to pronounce sentence today
STATES » PAGE 2

THE HISTORIAN'S LOT
One must note that the past has many layers
One must look at facts & what was dubbed fiction
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BLOCKBUSTER
Djokovic sets up a clash with Alcaraz
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INSIDE

'Trump's return likely to impact global order'
NEW DELHI
External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has said the inauguration of U.S. President Donald Trump, which he will attend, could have "profound consequences for the global order" » PAGE 5

Nine Navies hold joint drills in strategic straits
NEW DELHI
The Navies of nine Indo-Pacific countries, including India, are taking part in a multilateral exercise, La Perouse, hosted by France in the strategic straits of Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok. » PAGE 5

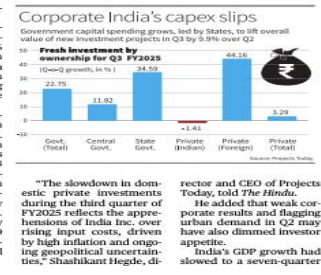
Awami League mobilises against interim regime
NEW DELHI
The deposed Awami League of Bangladesh has begun to mobilise itself both inside the country and in different parts of the world with party leaders beginning to challenge the interim government headed by Mohammad Yunus. » PAGE 16

TikTok 'begins restoring services to users in the US'
WASHINGTON
"TikTok says it is in the process" of restoring service in the U.S. after it went dark in response to a new law. It that Donald Trump, who said he planned to sign an order to give its parent company more time to find buyer. » PAGE 16

Poor demand hits private sector investments

New investments by domestic private players fell 1.4% from Q2; the slowdown reflects the apprehensions of India Inc. over the increase in input costs, driven by high inflation and geopolitical uncertainties; States drive growth in investments; mining, irrigation, and pharma, as well as construction and automobile sectors clocked deep contractions

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI
With domestic demand seen waning amid a spike in inflation and input costs, investment plans by India's private sector took a hit, falling 1.4% in the October-December quarter (Q3) of 2024-25 after a fleeting recovery in the second quarter (Q2).
However, government capex plans registered a sharp growth, lifting over all fresh investments in the economy by 9.9% in Q3 to ₹11.46 lakh crore from an updated tally of ₹10.43 lakh crore recorded in Q2. This rise was led by a 34.6% spike in fresh investments by State governments over Q2 levels, almost thrice the 11.8% growth in new out-



lays announced by the Union government.
Domestic investors, however, pulled back fresh investment plans by 1.4% from Q2 to nearly ₹6.11 lakh crore. In Q3, show data from Projects Today, a firm tracking new and ongoing investment projects in the country since 2000.
Total private sector projects slipped sharply from 1,253 in Q2 to 1,056 in Q3. Private investors' share in new investment projects dropped to 62.2% in Q3 from 66.2% in Q2. New investments by foreign players rose 44.2% sequentially, albeit from a low base, to ₹1.02 lakh crore. This spike was largely spilt in fresh investments by State governments over Q2 levels, almost thrice the 11.8% growth in new out-



Kumbh fire
Cylinder blast: Smoke rises from a fire that engulfed a section of a sprawling tented camp in Prayagraj on Sunday. The camp shelters devotees taking part in the 45-day Maha Kumbh festival. AP/PIPIRANI ON PAGE 4

Corporate India's capex slips
Government capital spending grows, led by States, to lift overall value of new investment projects in Q3 by 9.9% over Q2
Fresh investment by ownership for Q3 FY2025
(Growth over growth, % Q1)

Of voters' diversity dividend and the BJP's hat-trick lite

N. Sri Chandra
CHENNAI
Young India is banking for a new kind of politics, but neither the BJP nor the Congress fulfils the real aspirations of this India, senior journalist Rajdeep Sardesai said at The Hindu Lit for Life festival here on Sunday.
Mr. Sardesai was in conversation with N. Ram, veteran journalist and Director, The Hindu Group Publishing Private Ltd.; Jayanthi Natarajan, former Union Minister; and Varghese K. George, Resident Editor, The Hindu, New Delhi, on the topic "The election that surprised India".

'Uniquely diverse'
Speaking about the diversity dividend of voters, Mr. Sardesai said that India was uniquely diverse.
"To expect one leader or one party to establish his or her supremacy is not so easy. Last year at this time, after the [consecration of] Ram Mandir, the general impression was that the 2024 election was the start of the ceasefire. The outgoing Biden administration and President-elect Donald Trump had both pressed for an agreement to be reached before the inauguration. Mr. Netanyahu on Saturday warned that he had Mr. Trump's backing to continue fighting."

Mediation effort
The ceasefire deal was announced last week after a year of mediation by the United States, Qatar and Egypt. The outgoing Biden administration and President-elect Donald Trump had both pressed for an agreement to be reached before the inauguration. Mr. Netanyahu on Saturday warned that he had Mr. Trump's backing to continue fighting.
Mr. Sardesai said, "Though the BJP claimed a hat-trick, it was a sort of hat-trick lite, because the party failed to get a majority. The Congress has shifted under Prime Minister Modi's feet. They are trying to repair these cracks. We saw that in the Haryana and Madhya Pradesh happenings. Why was there a difference between Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan? These were surprises within non-surprises. But what is bringing out diversity and pluralism are the old Congress and chal-



Rajdeep Sardesai, senior journalist; N. Ram, Director, The Hindu Group; and Jayanthi Natarajan, former Union Minister, with Varghese K. George at the Lit For Life in Chennai on Sunday. R. KASU

enging the Nehruvian consensus that dominated Indian politics for about 60 years after independence. The BJP is not just another political party. It is a party that seeks to conquer India".
The emergence of a larger-than-life personality cult is also another feature of politics in the last decade and a half.
On the 2024 polls, Mr. Ram said there were some smaller surprises within the non-surprise. "The exit polls were completely off, almost without exception. Rajdeep, in his book, mentions that only Yogendra Yadav got it spot on. What I want to highlight is that several journalists who went to the field were very clear that in no way that the BJP as a single party was going to exceed between 240 and 250 seats. This was not based on solid information, particularly from the Hindi-speaking States."
He said not many expected 40 out of 40 seats in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry for the INDIA bloc. But the leaders of the ruling alliance were clear that they would not lose a single seat. "At the same time, how did Odisha and Madhya Pradesh happen? Why was there a difference between Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan? These were surprises within non-surprises. But what is bringing out diversity and pluralism are the foundation of electoral

Gaza truce takes hold with handover of first Israeli hostages after initial three-hour delay

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH
A ceasefire between Israel and Hamas took hold in the Gaza Strip on Sunday, ushering in an initial six-week period of calm and raising hopes for the release of dozens of militant-held hostages and an end to the devastating 15-month war. A last-minute delay by Hamas put off the truce's start by nearly three hours and highlighted its fragility.
Three Israeli hostages released from Gaza have been handed over to Israeli forces there. The three hostages are Romi Gonen, 24, kidnapped from the Nova music festival, and Emily Damar, 28, and Do-



Released Israeli hostage Doron Steinbrecher embraces her mother, Simona, after being held in Gaza since the attack by Hamas. REUTERS

estina began returning to Israel. The truce, which started at 11:15 a.m. local time, is the first step toward ultimately ending the conflict and returning nearly 100 hostages abducted in Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack. Hamas was supposed to provide the names before the start of the ceasefire, originally planned for 8:30 a.m. It released the names about two hours later, citing technical reasons and saying it was still committed to the agreement.
In the interim between 8:30 a.m. and when the ceasefire took hold, Israeli forces killed at least 26 people, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It did not say whether they were civilians or fighters.
The military has warned people to stay away from Israeli forces as they retreat to a buffer zone inside Gaza. In a separate development, Israel announced it had recovered the body of Oron Shaul, a soldier killed in the 2014 Israel-Hamas war, in a special operation in Gaza.
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IN BRIEF



Rahul booked for 'provoking rebellion against Indian state'

An FIR was registered against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Guwahati for allegedly provoking rebellion against the Indian state. Manoj Chhetia, an advocate, lodged a complaint with the Panbazar police station citing Mr. Gandhi's reported statement: "The BJP and RSS have captured every institution, and we are now fighting the BJP, RSS, and the Indian state itself."

Militants, security personnel exchange fire in Baramulla

Firing erupted between security forces and hiding militants in north Kashmir's Baramulla on Sunday evening during a search-and-cordon operation. "During a search-and-cordon operation launched by police and security forces at Sopore (Baramulla district), a hideout was busted. Fire was observed from inside. The area was cordoned off," a police spokesperson said.

3 dead, 4 missing as boat capsizes in Ganga in Bihar

Three people were killed and four went missing after a boat capsized in the Ganga in Bihar's Kotihar district on Sunday, officials said. The boat, with 17 people on board, capsized near Golaghat, they said. Ten people have been rescued so far, officials said. "The rescue operation is still under way for the four missing persons. An investigation has been ordered in District Magistrate Manesh Kumar Meena said."

India's democracy has proven doubters wrong, says Modi

PM calls Maha Kumbh a celebration of 'unity in diversity', urges people to take inspiration from Indian traditions in his first *Mam Ki Baat* of 2025

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In his first *Mam Ki Baat* of 2025 on Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the people on the Indian Constitution completing 75 years, and said everyone has to work towards building an India that even the makers of the Constitution would be proud of.

Mr. Modi said January 25 is celebrated as National Voters' Day as the Election Commission of India was established on this date. Praising the work of the poll panel, he said when the first elections were held in the country in 1951-52, some were doubtful whether the country's democracy would survive. "Our democracy proved all the apprehensions wrong - after all, India is the Mother of Democracy," he said.

Speaking on the ongoing Maha Kumbh festival, he said it celebrates "unity in diversity" of people from all over India and the world converge on the sands of the Sangam. There is no discrimination, no casteism anywhere in this tradition which has



All ears: Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini listens to the Prime Minister's *Mam Ki Baat* at the BJP office in Karnal on Sunday. *AA*

been going on for thousands of years... People from the south, from the east and west of India arrive here. In the Kumbh, the rich and the poor come together as one," he said, adding that the event also tells how traditions and the whole of India together. He said there are many temples across India, such as the shrines in Kumbakonam and Trichur, whose traditions are connected with the Kumbh. "These festivals connect the people of India with the Indian tradition, just as our scriptures emphasize on Dharma, Artha, Karma, Moksha (righteousness, prosperity, love, and self-realisation)," he said.

On the first anniversary of the Pran Pratishtha Parv in Ayodhya, which fell on January 17, he said lakhs of devotees had a darshan of Ram Lalla. "While walking on the path of development, we have to preserve our heritage and move forward, taking inspiration from that," he said. Speaking about man-animal conflicts, he said villagers in Nagaur in Assam had planted napier grass on about 800 bighas of barren land. "Elephants like this grass very much. The result was that instances of elephants straying into fields reduced. This is a matter of great relief for thousands of villagers. This effort of theirs has been liked by the elephants as well," he said.

Drive to seal rat-hole coal mines in Assam's Dima Hasao

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The police and local authorities in Assam's Dima Hasao district have initiated a drive to seal all the rat-hole mines and seize equipment at these mines. The bodies of four miners were retrieved by January 10, but five others remain untraced.

A few days ago, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that about 220 rat-hole mines had been detected in the district's Umrangso area bordering Meghalaya. Many of these were in operation despite the ban from the National Green Tribunal and the Supreme Court almost a decade ago.

"We have begun by restricting access to such mines, and dismantling at their sites," he said, adding that if persons had been arrested in connection with the January 6 mishap (see page 1). Officials said the hopes of rescuing the five miners still trapped in the flooded mine are dim. They said



Rescue work under way at a mine on January 8 where five miners remain untraced. *PII*

the ill-fated mine, believed to be interlinked underground with three abandoned mines nearby, still has more than 10 crore litres of water. Personnel of multiple agencies have been pumping water out from these mines continuously since January 7. Earlier, the Chief Minister had said it might take up to 60 days to suck the water out of the mines.

13 mines sealed
Officials in eastern Assam's Tinsukia district sealed 13 illegal rat-hole mines in the Margherita area adjoining Arunachal Pradesh. The operation was carried out jointly by Coal India Limited. A magistrate in the district said the exercise to seal the 13 mines identified so far was completed on Saturday. Four workers were arrested and an excavator and other equipment seized.

India to work with EU on developing modern tech'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said that India will work with the European Union to develop cutting-edge technologies and secure critical raw material supply chains to strengthen economic ties.

These issues were discussed during a meeting between Mr. Goyal and Maros Sefcovic, European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security in Brussels on January 18-19. The two leaders also agreed to build a commercially meaningful trade agenda, and work towards a mutually beneficial Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Commerce and Industry Ministry in a statement on Sunday said that India would build a commercially meaningful, fair and equitable trade agenda with the EU, addressing tariff and non-tariff barriers through simplification, and cost competitiveness for the benefit of businesses from both sides.

India would work together with the EU for developing cutting-edge technologies, secure critical raw material supply chains - reducing dependencies on non-market economies, an developing closer economic ties between India and the EU, the Ministry said.

Nine Navies hold joint drills in strategic straits between Indian Ocean and the Pacific

Dinakar Perli
NEW DELHI

The Navies of nine Indo-Pacific countries, including India, are taking part in a multilateral exercise in La Perouse, hosted by France in the strategic straits of Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok, between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.

The Indian Navy has deployed its guided-missile destroyer *INS Mumbai* for the exercise, scheduled from January 16 to 24 and led by the French Carrier Strike Group (CSG) headed by the carrier *Charles de Gaulle*.

The three straits are critical choke points as these

provide entry and exit into the Indian Ocean Region. With forays by the Chinese Navy in the region raising the straits are under increased focus.

Maritime safety
"Strengthening maritime safety will be at the core of this exercise, with the development of interoperability and the ability to act collectively in the event of a maritime crisis, which will contribute to it," the French Embassy in India said in a statement.

On the location of the exercise, it noted that these straits, mainstays of global maritime trade, are subject to numerous human-induced risks such as

maritime accidents and environmental degradation. Illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and natural risks such as earthquakes and tsunamis.

Australia, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the U.K., and the U.S. are part of the exercise.

In an important sign of strengthening interoperability, the statement said, "One where all the navies will train in the use of ICBN, a common identification and coordination system dedicated to the exchange of information, documents in order to effectively and collectively face a maritime crisis in a synchronized manner."

Modi-Trump meet on Jaishankar's 5-point agenda

Subhasini Haider
NEW DELHI

Ahead of his visit to Washington, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has said the inauguration of U.S. President Donald Trump, which he will attend, could have "profound consequences for the global order", spelling out some of the challenges and opportunities India could face over the next four years.

"Today, we may well be on the cusp of a new era," Mr. Jaishankar said at a lecture in Mumbai on Saturday. "One where all the States depend on an established tradition of foreign policy and focuses on its own interests, rather than in shaping the world itself... Where the focus is more on the conditions of competition rather than on observance of regimes,"

he said, indicating that the incoming Trump administration would pose the biggest challenge globally to the prevailing rules of the order, which could affect India on trade and immigration issues in particular. As a result, Mr. Jaishankar's five-point agenda during the Washington trip, his third visit to the U.S. in the past six months, will be to set the course for an intense engagement with the Trump administration, beginning with an early meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Trump. That could come as early as next month, as Mr. Modi will travel to Paris for a summit with the European Union and the G7.

Mr. Modi will travel to Paris on Friday in what he called a "very good" call for China and the U.S. on Saturday. *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Mr.



S. Jaishankar for Mr. Jaishankar is to set a course for the Quad strategy in India later this year. The Quad Foreign Ministers (Australia, India, Japan) are expected to be in Washington, D.C. for the inaugural ceremony of President Trump." External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal announced on Friday. On Saturday, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Mr.

Trump had told advisers he wanted to travel to China early in his tenure, and was also considering a visit to India.

Ahead of such a visit, all eyes will be on who Mr. Trump appoints as his Ambassador to India, as Eric Garcetti, a political appointee during the Biden administration, will step down on Tuesday.

In contrast to his strong rhetoric against China during his campaign, Jaishankar's nomination of a number of Chinese-Americans to his cabinet, Mr. Trump has made a number of overtures to China's largest group by naming in recent weeks, including inviting him to the inauguration, and speaking to him over the telephone on Friday in what he called a "very good" call for China and the U.S. In addition, Mr. Trump's plans to begin his tenure

with a series of "Executive Orders", including ordering mass deportations and raids on "day one" as overlooked by border czar Tom Homan, will be watched closely during Mr. Jaishankar's visit. According to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report released in December, there are about 17,940 Indian nationals out of a total of 1.4 million on the "final removal order" list, and 2,647 Indians are among those immigrants already in detention centres, making them the fourth-largest group by nationality, following Mexico, Honduras, and Guatemala.

Finally, the Jaishankar delegation's meetings with Trump advisers, including billionaire Elon Musk, will be watched for announcements on their engagement with India.

THE CROSSWORD 14386



- Across**
- 6 Appreciate SA, not the first clue (5)
 - 7 Acoustic had good people with bit of theological understanding (9)
 - 10 Oracular and keen on exercises involving crosswords mainly (7)
 - 11 Domestic broadcast carries trivia evolving now and then (7)

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

- 12 Check what Ram mellows into beans (7)
- 13 When jury is not able to reach a conclusion, one is thrown to the wind (7)
- 14 It is used to be basic dental floss (7,4)
- 15 Book our boxes, prepare one for bedroom (7)
- 16 Our land's tough nut to crack (7)
- 17 Spot over large empty cloth (7)
- 18 Keeps an eye on alien thought process (7)
- 19 Bond for victory tally in response (7)
- 20 Five things like basil, not hard to cultivate, chew and digest, say (5)
- 21 Parents laze, afterwards youngsters delightfully assemble to enjoy basically (4,4)
- 22 Upset about men's partitioning of body (6)
- 23 One who comes for an animal husbandry tool (10)
- 24 Does sad ballads (4)
- 25 Don't A lost harvest just after killing of farmers' leader (7)
- 26 Empty (6)
- 27 Aura is energy in motion, covers large part of our world (17)
- 28 Gossip or anecdote about technique (6)
- 29 Take time, test one, say for measure of speed (4,6)
- 30 John, our ancestor preserved lost works (7)
- 31 Refused a contract with American states? Ved Ureel! (8)
- 32 One who ill-treats a black client? (6)
- 33 Free time? One stuffs marijuana mostly (6)
- 34 Better cultivate tulip with minimum fertilisers (6)
- 35 Study southern part of a state carved out of Serbia from the beginning (2,4)
- 36 Sounds like healthy praise (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to previous puzzle

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Importance of spouse

Lord Narayana takes many avatars and the aim of every avatar is to save sadhus. Ramanujacharya says that only those who want to be always with the Lord can be referred to as sadhus. To these sadhus, Lord Narayana gives Himself. That is what is meant by protecting them and establishing dharma, said M.A. Venkatakrisnan in a discourse. Rama is the embodiment of dharma - Ranganatha Dharma. So when He comes to the world for the sake of the sadhus, it is as if dharma itself is being established in the world. This is what is meant by dharma samsthapana, which is spoken of in the Bhagavad Gita. When the Lord took the Rama avatar, He married Sita, and there is a sutra behind this. Of the four ashramas, only in the brahmanacharya ashrama and the sanyasa ashrama a man is without a wife. When he leaves grihastha ashrama and retires for vanaprastha ashrama, he has to take his wife with him. He cannot proceed alone.

In temples, during the flag hoisting ceremony of utsavas, there is a rule about which priest can hoist the flag. An unmarried man, a widower or a man separated from his wife cannot perform the dvajasthapanam. Sastras forbid a man from performing certain rites without his wife. He cannot do agnihotra without his wife. We see the importance of a wife in the Ramayana. When Lord Rama wants to perform avamedha yaga, the sages tell Him that since Sita is not with Him, He cannot perform the yaga. They suggest a way out. He should make a statue of Sita, which is as tall as Sita and has the same build as Sita. Lord Rama is to see the statue as Sita Herself. Rama makes such a statue, and only then He is allowed to perform the yaga.

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Dinakar Peri

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In an important sign of strengthening interoperability, the statement said, “During this exercise, all navies will train in the use of IORIS, a communication and coordination system dedicated to the exchange of information, documents in order to effectively and collectively face a maritime crisis in a synchronized manner.”

A surge in radical governments, the hope of democracy

Pyrrhic peace

A united administration under the Palestinian Authority must be in place

After 15 months of war, which saw the deaths of tens of thousands of people, the destruction of much of Gaza and multiple rounds of painstaking negotiations, Hamas and Israel have agreed to a ceasefire. The news was out, thousands ventured out on the streets in Gaza, hoping that the daily bombardment and shelling would at last end. Uncertainty still lingered, but both sides resolved their last-minute differences over details about Israel's partial withdrawal from Gaza and the names of the hostages to be released on day one and the ceasefire came into force on Sunday. This is not a permanent end to the war. But given the violence that Israel and Gaza have witnessed since October 7, 2023, even a pause in the war is a great relief, especially for Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians. The agreement is expected to be implemented in three phases. In the first phase, Hamas will release 33 hostages, while Israel will release about 1,000 Palestinian security prisoners. The second phase would see more exchanges of hostages and prisoners and both sides are required to announce a permanent end to the hostilities. The third phase will involve discussions on the 'day after', including who should be in charge of Gaza.

As of now, both sides stay focused on phase one. Trouble could arise when negotiations for the next phase begin. When Israel launched the war, it set two objectives for itself - the destruction of Hamas and the release of hostages. In 18 months of war, Israel has degraded Hamas's militant infrastructure, but the group has survived and reinvigorated itself as an insurgency. According to Antony Blinken, the outgoing U.S. Secretary of State, Hamas recruited as many fighters as it had lost during the war, largely in the form of young Hamas or secure the release of the hostages through the IDP's military tactics in Gaza. This could probably be one of the factors that persuaded Benjamin Netanyahu to accept the ceasefire. But he has not committed to bringing the war to an end. Hamas's military wing demands a complete withdrawal of Israel from Gaza. Despite the possible roadblocks, the fact that a ceasefire came into force is welcome news. It provides a desperately needed relief for Gaza and a platform to build further talks. Israel, Palestinians as well as the international community should now work towards bridging the gaps in the post-war world. India must accept a situation that would leave Hamas as a ruling force in Gaza. A more pragmatic solution is to form a united administration of all Palestinian factions under the leadership of the internationally recognised Palestinian Authority, and then shift the focus towards the reconstruction of Gaza. But for this plan to work and peace to prevail, Israel should be ready to withdraw all its troops from the Gaza Strip.

Murder most foul

Making India safe for all must be a priority for State authorities

A police conviction on Saturday of a former civic police volunteer in the rape and murder of a second-year postgraduate trainee doctor in Kolkata has brought some closure to her parents, but the struggle to make systemic changes to make the workplace safe for women continues. The District and Sessions Court, Sealdah, found Sanjay Roy guilty of the horrific crime at the State-run V. Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9, 2024, while on duty. Pronouncing the verdict in the presence of the parents and the accused, Judge Anirban Das said evidence was found guilty based on evidence sent forward by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The accused is being held guilty under Sections 64 (rape), 66 (causing death), and 103D (murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Reading out the verdict, the judge said the crime carries the highest punishment of a death sentence and the lowest of life imprisonment; the terms of the sentence will be announced later. In his observations, the judge also put the spotlight on the functioning of the hospital administration, saying that the actions of the college's principal and other senior members had "created a 'culture of confusion' in his mind. In widespread protests after the crime, doctors, the parents, and civil society had alleged that it could not have been the handiwork of only one individual.

Sandeep Ghosh, principal of the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital at the time of the murder, was arrested by the CBI on charges of evidence tampering and the delay in filing the first information report (FIR), but was released on bail as the charge sheet had not been filed in 90 days, as is the rule. Inefficiencies in policing have also come to the fore; there was an inordinate delay in filing the FIR, for example, and other lapses. The parents of the doctor said they respect the judgement and sought the highest punishment for the accused but expressed hope that the investigation would not be halted so that all the culprits are nabbed. A sentiment echoed by protesting doctors, activists - and also the Opposition. There are cases pending in the High Court and the Supreme Court of India, which began hearing *in suo moto* after the uproar over the rape. It should not need a rape and murder to walk up to appalling working conditions, such as the lack of basic amenities and a safe room to rest. Kolkata's state-run hospitals are stretched thin and reports of corruption are rife. The State government announced a slew of measures for the protection of health workers, and the onus is on the administration to follow through with the promises.

One side seems fairly certain now. If an Islamic radical group were to seize power by force, then the world will be willing to legitimise it and forgive its past deeds. But till the time such a group does not capture power, it will either be fought tooth and nail and/or treated like an enemy.

We had Afghanistan in 2021. We now have Syria in 2024. When the Taliban captured power on August 15, 2021, 13 members of the United States troops were killed in an Islamic State (IS) suicide attack and \$7.1 billion worth of U.S. weaponry was left behind in Afghanistan. However, the U.S. and the West as well as China and Russia bent backwards to work with the Taliban. The West justified this by saying that this would wean the Taliban away from supporting terrorism and help in the protection of women's and minorities' rights. They talked about an 'inclusive government' but democracy was not uppermost in their minds. The then UN Special Representative to Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons, even told the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) that the Taliban was 'misunderstood'.

Treated with kid gloves
The ultimate irony was how "karma" had come full circle. In the days preceding the Taliban's capture of Afghanistan, the "Troika Plus" - of the U.S., China and Russia with Pakistan, had tried to coordinate their efforts in Afghanistan to keep India completely out of the picture and its vital interests. In the UNSC, even an innocuous reference to the Heart of Asia Conference on Afghanistan was vetoed because India was one of the countries attending it.

But when the events of August 2021 unfolded, India was the president of UNSC that month. Any veto or resolution against India's position because India was one of the countries attending it. When UNSC Resolution 2593, after the Taliban takeover, was passed on August 30, India left its mark particularly in the paragraph relating to Afghan soil not being used for terrorist activities. The expansive reference to terrorist and terrorist organisations in the UNSC Resolution 1267 sanctions list was inserted at India's behest, where it coordinated closely with the U.S. side. This was necessary to remove any ambiguity about Pakistanian terrorist organisations associated with the ISIL (Daesh) and Qaeda, including the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed - the latter in 1267 from using Afghan soil to launch terrorist attacks on India.

In December 2021, the UNSC allowed the Taliban to get donor money directly into its coffers. With no political will among the P-5 or any effort to demand accountability for implementing UNSC 2593, the Taliban soon



T.S. Pithamurti
was Permanent Representative/ambassador of India to the United Nations (UN), New York (2021-22) and President of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for August 2021.

denied girls school education, imposed restrictions on women, and stopped all moves for an inclusive government. Now, the world looks the other way.

Now, Syria and Bangladesh
And now Syria in 2024. We have just witnessed a radical Islamic leader Abu Muhammad al-Jolani or Ahmed al-Shaara of the Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS) seize power, ending the toppling of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Al-Jolani was earlier the head of the Islamic Front, which had links to international terror groups. His radical outfit, the HTS, which was earlier an al Qaeda wing in Syria called the Jabhat al-Nusra, still features in the U.S. State Department list of terror groups. Mirroring what they would want the Taliban, the U.S. and the West have lined up behind the HTS and its leader. The first move of the U.S. was to remove the bounty of \$10 million on al-Jolani's head for his capture. Capturing power can help evade capture also.

This is wonderful news for Islamic terrorists and extremist groups gaining ground, especially in Africa such as in Mali, and adopting IS and al Qaeda techniques to topple governments. But the world is preoccupied with Ukraine and West Asia. India has been busy breaking the power of home, in Bangladesh. Even if the collapse of the elected government in Bangladesh has been largely due to an autocratic government stifling democratic forces and leading the people to demand a supporting regime change, the U.S. clearly downplayed the interests of its "strategic" partner India. It is dropping its interim military-led government of Muhammad Yunus, which is seen as tolerating, even encouraging, Islamic radical groups in Bangladesh and as a threat to its minorities. The last thing India needs is the revival of Islamic radicalism in Bangladesh and the two years have seen the two countries and its peoples come closer in a variety of ways for mutual benefit.

When Sheikh Hasina stepped down, the outcry came to power in 2008. It was seen as free and fair. The people overwhelmingly rejected the violent Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) party (BNP) of Khaleda Zia and their Islamic radical partners who were in power. Just when the world thought that the Jamaat-e-Islami stood discredited for siding with Pakistan in the 1971 war and rejected by the people for causing Afghan soil to cause mayhem and disrupting lives, the popular student protests of 2024 and the ensuing military coup have given them a fresh lease of life. While there is no doubt that the Ansarullah Islamic Front (AI) and the Jamaat-e-Islami in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), the

The last thing India needs is the revival of Islamic radicalism in Bangladesh

The historian must note that the past has many layers



Harbans Mukhia
taught history at the Jawahar Institute of Postgraduate Studies, the Nehru University

It is of course the historian's professional responsibility to bring knowledge of the past back to life. This is done academically through training in the norms and the methods of the discipline is imparted in institutions like universities. The discipline requires the historian to imbibe its basic premises: evidence is the primary basis of one's research; each statement must be supported by evidence which itself has to undergo a critical evaluation for its authenticity, proximity to the event or phenomenon under review, and its context and compatibility with other bits of evidence which might be corroborative or contradictory. The inferences drawn from the evidence must conform to the test of reason rather than provide any explanation outside the realm of reason.

The other layers
So far so good. But the past has other layers not susceptible to evidence from the archives, texts, manuscripts or archaeology. One such layer is memory not captured in texts, manuscripts, documents or on the dias up field. It survives in popular memories of events, persons and happenings, often at variance with the accounts given by professional history. The crucial difference is that while the historian has been bound to stick to the evidence, the popular phenomenon meticulously sticking to the prescribed modes and methods of research, popular memory is not bound by any such constraints. It does not have to adduce empirical evidence or even follow it up with an inference that is subject to rational analysis. Yet, its power as an image of the past remains undiminished. Let us take some examples. Have we not heard of Emperor Akbar's court adorned with the nine jewells (Nav Ratnas)? No one had in Akbar's time. The ones counted in the group nine included some fake ones, but the notion of Nav Ratnas is a much later popular creation, perhaps not before

the 18th century. It does not alter history very much but lends some colour to the past. But some other memories do alter history as well, a little or drastically. The story of Jodha Bai, for instance, can show how a legend about the historians might, that there was no Jodha Bai in Akbar's harem and that Jahangir's mother was a prisoner of the Akbar, but Jodha Bai does not disappear from sight.

But these memories are more colourful distortions from the rational evidence of historical "facts". There are others that have proven to be far more powerful than the historians' version. The Bahari masjid case is an outstanding instance of this power.

The example of Ayodhya
Several historians, with help from archaeologists, had argued during the 1980s that there was no evidence of the existence of a Ram temple which was demolished in 1528. The archaeological evidence from a large number of sources from the 16th century on was unearched to strengthen the argument. The first authentic evidence of a link between Lord Ram and the construction of the masjid dated to 1822 in a Durban-lanone court document which mentions a small platform within the four walls surrounding the masjid as a Ram temple. The temple was mentioned by Sita Ki Rasol. A lot of accretion to this bare mention occurred during the 19th century, some violence and the intervention of the Awadhi state.

Clearly, some mythology of the association of the site of the masjid with Lord Ram had begun to grow, perhaps a few decades before it got recorded in the "fact" as it was added on to it - some by its own evolution and some by the state. In the end, the Supreme Court of India, in its final judgement of 2019, put its stamp on the historians' evidence that no Ram temple, indeed

Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing, the Islami Chhatra Shibir, the Hefazat-e-Islam, the Jangana Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMB) and the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISKP) have taken advantage of the situation, it is not as if the people of Bangladesh have embraced them wholeheartedly. Consequently, these radical groups have tried to shore up support for their extremist ideologies by attacking the minority communities, forcing the interim government to release Islamic extremists from prison (such as the Islamic cleric, Sheikh Rahman), head of the group, adopting shrill anti-India rhetoric, confining the dismantling of Sheikh Hasina's legacy with attacks on India. India should be careful not to fall into this trap. Religious hate has been on the rise around the world. It was when this writer was India's Permanent Representative to the UN that India brought up, for the first time in October 2022, the rise of religiophobia against non-Arabic religions, including against Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. India condemned all forms of religious hate, whether in the U.S. and the West or in Bangladesh and the neighbourhood. While India may have taken its eye off the ball when it came to the Sheikh Hasina government, it cannot ignore Islamic extremism against its head in Bangladesh and posing renewed danger to India's national security - something which New Delhi has been aware of over the last 16 years.

The larger picture
However, for both sides to view the unfolding events purely through a religious lens - be it an Islamic lens or Hindu lens - would be a mistake. This has been counterproductive before and will be no more. In fact, Islamic radicals are in India, and, so are the officials who have been appointed as advisers to Mr. Yamas. Precisely to polarise forces within the two countries. On the other hand, India has the larger perspective in the mind to protect its bilateral relations with Bangladesh. It has demonstrated its readiness to do business with the interim government. India has removed its objections in its bilateral relations in the last two decades, except maybe for the sharing of Teesta River security. What is forgotten is that when Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) revolted in February 2009, just after the first elections of Bangladesh in December 2008, it was India which gave its rock solid support to the newly-elected government and helped save democracy.

It is in Bangladesh's own interest that this military coup does not translate into an Islamic coup and gives the way of Syria or Afghanistan. The silver lining is that, having tasted the power of democracy in 2008, and now in 2024, it will be difficult to put the clock back.

no temple of any kind was demolished in 1528 to construct the masjid, and recorded the masjid's demolition on December 6, 1992 as a heinous crime and recommended prosecution of those guilty. Yet, going against its own findings, it gave away a small piece of land where the masjid stood for the construction of a Ram temple. In the end, memory proved far more decisive than "history".

On a holistic reconstruction
Historians have, in the pursuit of their reconstruction of the past, insatiably recorded in archives, texts documents and archaeological data, from popular memory and popular versions of history which in reality extend to an age, besides persons and events. A holistic reconstruction of the past requires the historian to connect herself with popular memory as much as with archival data to investigate the social/cultural/political context of the origins of this memory, the process of its evolution, including its manipulation for given ends.

If history and social memory had been evolving through their own dynamics in the past, the present is a watershed moment when social media has created a massive space for, on the one hand, real common people's memories and on the other, collecting the past as well as for the grossest distortions of both the historian's version of the past and including similarly distorted versions of memory.

Thus, today's historian, the professional custodian of the past, must engage with "facts" as much as with what she has habitually dismissed as "fiction" comprising the vast array of the past. She must treat these as historical data: popular cultures of the past, gossip, conversations, silences, absences... History speaks most eloquently and consequentially only when it speaks in its entirety.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

R.G. Kar case
The verdict may have been pronounced in the R.G. Kar case, but there is still one question to ask - what about the others who were involved, directly or indirectly? This has been a case that led to months of protests by medical staff and students, with the confidence of the public in the judicial system to some extent. But the fact that the other alleged perpetrators still remain at large shows

that only half the battle has been fought.
Ananya Singha,
Kolkata
Animal welfare
I write to express concern and indignation regarding the recent that led to months of protest by medical staff and students, with the confidence of the public in the judicial system to some extent. But the fact that the other alleged perpetrators still remain at large shows

legality, and ethical responsibility. This directive not only contravenes the Animal Welfare Act, 1960, but also disregards the basic principles of dignity and animal welfare, thereby violating the guidelines of the Animal Welfare Board of India, which uphold the right to life and care for stray animals in public spaces. The Supreme Court of India has, on multiple occasions, affirmed the importance of ensuring the welfare of stray animals while maintaining the delicate balance of coexistence.
Tom Moppel,
Mysuru
'Lit for Life'
The 'Lit for Life' festival was a great effort which will be remembered as a harbinger of the reading habits of people, on the

wane now due to digital intrusions. The session by David Williams (I attended it with my grandson) which saw my children enjoying the programme will be richly remembered by them. The only disadvantage was the overlapping of programmes - at the main hall and the pavilion.
The V. Purushothaman,
Chennai
Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

A surge in radical governments, the hope of democracy

One thing seems fairly certain now. If an Islamic radical group were to seize power by force, then the world will be willing to legitimise it and forgive its past deeds. But till the time such a group does not capture power, it will either be fought tooth and nail and/or treated like an enemy.

We had Afghanistan in 2021. We now have Syria in 2024.

When the Taliban captured power on August 15, 2021, 13 members of the United States troops were killed in an Islamic State (IS) suicide attack, and \$7.1 billion worth of U.S. weaponry was left behind in Afghanistan. However, the U.S. and the West as well as China and Russia bent backwards to work with the Taliban. The West justified this by saying that this would wean the Taliban away from supporting terrorism and help in the protection of women's and minorities' rights. They talked about "inclusive government" but democracy was not uppermost in their minds. The then UN Special Representative to Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons, even told the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) that the Taliban was 'misunderstood'.

Treated with kid gloves

The ultimate irony was how "*karma*" had come full circle. In the days preceding the Taliban's capture of Afghanistan, the "Troika Plus", of the U.S., China and Russia with Pakistan, had tried to coordinate their efforts in Afghanistan to keep India completely out and ignore our vital interests. In the UNSC, even an innocuous reference to the Heart of Asia Conference on Afghanistan was deleted from the draft statement because India was one of the countries attending it.

But when the events of August 2021 unfolded, India was the president of UNSC that month. Any text or resolution required India's concurrence. When UNSC Resolution 2593, after the Taliban takeover, was passed on August 30, India left its imprint particularly in the paragraph relating to Afghan soil not being used for terrorist activities. The express reference to terrorists and terrorist organisations in the UNSC Resolution 1267 sanctions list was inserted at India's behest, where it coordinated closely with the U.S. side. This was necessary to remove any ambiguity about Pakistani terrorist organisations associated with the ISIL (Daesh) and al-Qaeda, including the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed – listed in 1267 – from using Afghan soil to launch terrorist attacks on India.

In December 2021, the UNSC allowed the Taliban to get donor money directly into its coffers. With no political will among the P-5 or the West to demand accountability for implementing UNSCR 2593, the Taliban soon



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And now Syria in 2024. We have just witnessed a radical Islamic leader Abu Muhammad al-Jolani or Ahmed al-Shaara of the Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS) seize power, culminating in the toppling of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Al-Jolani was earlier leader of the al Qaeda in the region, with links to international terror groups. His radical outfit, the HTS, which was earlier an al Qaeda wing in Syria called the Jabhat al-Nusra, still features in the U.S. State Department list of terror groups. Mirroring what they did with the Taliban, the U.S. and the West have lined up behind the HTS and its leader. The first move of the U.S. was to remove the bounty of \$10 million on al-Jolani's head for his capture. Capturing power can help evade capture also.

This is wonderful news for Islamic terrorists and extremist groups gaining ground, especially in Africa such as in Mali, and adopting IS and al Qaeda techniques to topple governments. But the world is preoccupied with Ukraine and West Asia. Now, India has a situation brewing closer to home, in Bangladesh.

Even if the collapse of the elected government in Bangladesh has been largely due to an autocratic government stifling democratic forces and losing the plot, under the guise of supporting regime change, the U.S. clearly downplayed the interests of its "strategic" partner India. It is propping up the interim military-led government of Muhammad Yunus, which is seen as tolerating, even encouraging, Islamic radical groups in Bangladesh and is a threat to its minorities. The last thing India needs is the revival of Islamic radicalism in Bangladesh, where the last 16 years have seen the two countries and its peoples come closer in a variety of ways for mutual benefit.

When Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League came to power in 2008, it was seen as free and fair elections with a cleaned-up electoral list and the Bangladesh Army staying on the sidelines. The people overwhelmingly rejected the violent past of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) of Khaleda Zia and their Islamic radical partners such as the Jamaat-e-Islami. Just when one thought that the Jamaat-e-Islami stood discredited for siding with Pakistan in the 1971 war and rejected by the people of Bangladesh for causing mayhem and disrupting lives, the popular student protests of 2024 and the ensuing military coup have given them a fresh lease of life.

While there is no doubt that the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) – affiliated to the Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), the



Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing, the Islami Chhatra Shibir, the Hefazat-e-Islam, the Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) and the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISKP) have taken advantage of the situation, it is not as if the people of Bangladesh have embraced them wholeheartedly. Consequently, these radical groups have tried to shore up support for their extremist ideologies by attacking the minority communities, forcing the interim government to release Islamic extremists from prison (such as like Jashimuddin Rahmani, head of the ABT), and adopting shrill anti-India rhetoric, conflating the dismantling of Sheikh Hasina's legacy with attacks on India. India should be careful not to fall into this trap.

Religious hate has been on the rise around the world. It was when this writer was India's Permanent Representative to the UN that India brought up, for the first time, in 2021-2022, the rise of religiophobia against non-Abrahamic religions, including against Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. India condemned all forms of religious hate, whether in the U.S. and the West or in Bangladesh and the neighbourhood. While India may have taken its eye off the ball when it came to the Sheikh Hasina government, it cannot ignore Islamic extremism again rearing its head in Bangladesh and posing renewed danger to India's national security – something which New Delhi successfully prevented over the last 16 years.





The larger picture

However, for both sides to view the unfolding events purely through a religious lens – be it an Islamic lens or Hindu lens – would be a mistake. This has been counterproductive before and will be so now. In fact, Islamic radicals are baiting India, and, unfortunately, so are the officials who have been appointed as advisers to Mr. Yunus, precisely to polarise forces within their own country. On the other hand, India has the larger perspective in mind to protect its bilateral relations from damage. It has reiterated its readiness to do business with the interim government. India has removed most irritants in its bilateral relations in the last two decades, except maybe for the sharing of Teesta river waters. What is forgotten is that when Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) revolted in February 2009, just after the first clean elections of Bangladesh in December 2008, it was India which gave its rock solid support to the newly-elected government and helped save democracy.


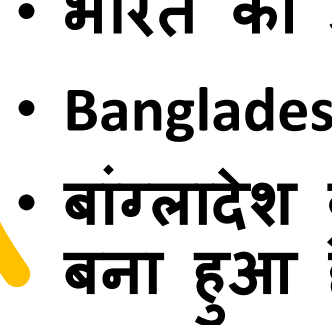
It is in Bangladesh's own interest that this military coup does not translate into an Islamic coup and goes the way of Syria or Afghanistan. The silver lining is that, having tasted the power of democracy in 2008, and now in 2024, it will be difficult to put the clock back.






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- Introduction to the Issue / मुद्दे की भूमिका
 - Radical groups seizing power don't seek legitimacy but enforce their rule through violence.
 - कट्टरपंथी समूह सत्ता प्राप्त करने के बाद वैधता नहीं चाहते, बल्कि हिंसा के माध्यम से शासन लागू करते हैं।
 - Examples: Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan (2021) and rise of extremist forces in Syria, Bangladesh, and other regions.
 - उदाहरण: अफगानिस्तान में तालिबान का कब्ज़ा (2021) और सीरिया, बांग्लादेश व अन्य क्षेत्रों में चरमपंथी ताकतों का उभार।
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- . Taliban's Takeover of Afghanistan / अफगानिस्तान में तालिबान का कब्ज़ा
- August 15, 2021: Taliban captured Kabul; 13 US soldiers died, and \$7.1 billion of American military equipment was left behind.
- 15 अगस्त 2021: तालिबान ने काबुल पर कब्ज़ा किया; 13 अमेरिकी सैनिक मारे गए और 7.1 बिलियन डॉलर का सैन्य उपकरण पीछे छूट गया।
- US, China, Russia worked with the Taliban, sidelining India's concerns.
- अमेरिका, चीन और रूस ने तालिबान के साथ सहयोग किया, जबकि भारत की चिंताओं को नज़रअंदाज़ किया गया।
- Taliban initially promised inclusive governance but later restricted women's rights and minority freedoms.
- तालिबान ने शुरुआत में समावेशी शासन का वादा किया था, लेकिन बाद में महिलाओं और अल्पसंख्यकों के अधिकारों को सीमित कर दिया।

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- . Radicalism in Syria and Bangladesh / सीरिया और बांग्लादेश में कट्टरवाद
 - Rise of HTS (Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham) in Syria, with links to al-Qaeda, reflecting Taliban's power grab.
 - सीरिया में HTS (हयात तहरीर अल-शाम) का उदय, जो अल-कायदा से जुड़ा है, तालिबान के सत्ता हथियाने की नीति को दर्शाता है।
 - Bangladesh faces an increasing influence of radical Islamic groups.
 - बांग्लादेश में कट्टरपंथी इस्लामी समूहों का प्रभाव बढ़ रहा है।
 - Sheikh Hasina's government faces criticism from Islamic hardliners, and groups like Jamaat-e-Islami are gaining ground.
 - शेख हसीना की सरकार को इस्लामी कट्टरपंथियों से चुनौती मिल रही है, और जमात-ए-इस्लामी जैसे समूह मजबूत हो रहे हैं।
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- **India's Diplomatic Response / भारत की कूटनीतिक प्रतिक्रिया**
 - **India has remained cautious in its stance, avoiding direct intervention but closely monitoring the developments.**
 - **भारत ने सतर्क रुख अपनाया है, सीधा हस्तक्षेप नहीं किया लेकिन घटनाक्रम पर नजर बनाए रखी।**
 - **India removed indirect criticism of Taliban from UNSC resolutions in 2021 under US pressure.**
 - **2021 में, अमेरिका के दबाव में, भारत ने UNSC प्रस्तावों से तालिबान की आलोचना को हटा दिया।**
 - **Delhi supports Bangladesh's Sheikh Hasina government as a stable partner in the region.**
 - **दिल्ली बांग्लादेश में शेख हसीना सरकार को क्षेत्रीय स्थिरता के लिए समर्थन दे रही है।**

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- Religious Tensions and Their Impact / धार्मिक तनाव और उनका प्रभाव
 - Islamic radicalism in Bangladesh threatens minorities, especially Hindus.
 - बांग्लादेश में इस्लामी कट्टरवाद अल्पसंख्यकों, विशेष रूप से हिंदुओं के लिए खतरा है।
 - India must balance its response to avoid escalating tensions.
 - भारत को अपने जवाब को संतुलित रखना चाहिए ताकि तनाव और न बढ़े।
 - Bangladesh's relations with India have improved, but radical groups pose a risk.
 - बांग्लादेश के साथ भारत के संबंध सुधरे हैं, लेकिन कट्टरपंथी समूहों से खतरा बना हुआ है।
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- Geopolitical and Historical Context / भू-राजनीतिक और ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ
 - Taliban's rise is compared to earlier extremist takeovers, showing a pattern of radical groups exploiting power vacuums.
 - तालिबान के उदय की तुलना पहले के चरमपंथी कब्जों से की गई है, जो दर्शाता है कि ये समूह सत्ता के खालीपन का फायदा उठाते हैं।
 - Bangladesh's history of Islamist violence, including 2009 BDR mutiny, highlights the challenge of maintaining stability.
 - बांग्लादेश के इस्लामी हिंसा के इतिहास, जिसमें 2009 का BDR विद्रोह शामिल है, से स्थिरता बनाए रखने की चुनौती स्पष्ट होती है।
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- **Future Outlook and Recommendations / भविष्य की दृष्टि और सुझाव**
- **India should support democratic forces in neighboring countries to counter extremism.**
- **भारत को चरमपंथ का मुकाबला करने के लिए पड़ोसी देशों में लोकतांत्रिक ताकतों का समर्थन करना चाहिए।**
- **Bangladesh should maintain strict policies against radical groups to prevent Taliban-like scenarios.**
- **बांग्लादेश को तालिबान जैसे परिदृश्य से बचने के लिए कट्टरपंथी समूहों के खिलाफ कड़े नियम लागू करने चाहिए।**
- **International pressure and diplomatic engagement are key to stabilizing South Asia.**
- **अंतरराष्ट्रीय दबाव और कूटनीतिक सहभागिता दक्षिण एशिया में स्थिरता बनाए रखने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है।**

SPAT WITH BROADCASTER Djokovic skips customary post-match TV interview



Novak Djokovic declined to do a customary post-match TV interview after his win on Sunday... Djokovic said on air by official broadcaster Channel 9's Tony Jones.

LIFE PARTNER Neeraj Chopra ties the knot with tennis player Himani Mor



Javelin ace Neeraj Chopra on Sunday announced his wedding to tennis player Himani Mor. "Grateful for every blessing that brought us to this moment together."

DOMINANT India women beat Nepal in final, clinch title in style in kho kho WC



The Indian women won the inaugural kho kho World Cup in New Delhi on Sunday, easing past Nepal 7-0 in the final. The dominant display from the home side was consistent with its superiority right through the tournament.

SUPER SUNDAY Indian men beat Nepal in final to ring in the double cheer



India completed the double at the kho kho World Cup as the men showed the women in lifting silverware in New Delhi on Sunday. Up against Nepal in the final, the men won 54-36 to live up to the expectations of a buoyant crowd.

Kalinga Lancers script a sensational comeback win

The shootout victory makes thousands of home fans happy while Pipers suffer their seventh consecutive defeat. Reynolds-Cotterill does the start with three penalty saves

Y.B. Sarangi

BANGALORE

Goalkeeper Toby Reynolds-Cotterill saved thrice in penalty shootout to erase a stunning comeback to pip Delhi SG Pipers in an action-packed high-scoring Pool-A thriller of the Hockey India League at the Birsu Munda Hockey Stadium here on Sunday.

As the men's league entered its second phase, Lancers rode on Alex Hendrick's braces to erase a three-goal deficit as the two sides were locked 5-5 in the regulation period. Lancers won the shootout 3-2 to record their fourth win and make thousands of home fans happy, while Pipers suffered their seventh consecutive defeat.

Lancers conducted raids from the left and earned a short corner in the 13th minute. Hendrick flicked low to put the host ahead.

The second quarter sud-



Acrobatic effort: Reynolds-Cotterill pulls off a save in the shootout. BY MOORTHY

denly switched in Pipers' favour as the Graham Reid and coached side converted four penalty corners in the space of five minutes.

Following his manpreet Singh's smart effort, Tomas Domene drag-kicked high to equalise. The Argentinian scored from the right to score Pipers' lead by shooting home a low and angled flick to Indian Parklands left.

Corey Weyer found Pipers' third goal off a rebound, beating Pathak on the right. Pipers made it 4-1 as Koji

Yamasaki jumped to tap in another rebound and helped Pipers retain their advantage at the halfway stage.

Brinkman slammed in off a free ball inside the circle to pull one back soon after the exchanges. Dilraj Singh finished off Domene's excellent circle entry from the right to score Pipers' fifth.

Lancers, served well by Antoine Kina and Boby Singh Dhami up front, refused to give up.

They pumped in three goals within seven minutes of the fourth quarter to make a sensational comeback. Quick passes from outside the 17 and deflections enabled Lancers to slot in two through Brinkman and Anand Bir Singh. Hendrick utilised Lancers' sixth short corner to take it to the shootouts.

The results: Pool A: Vedanta Kalinga Lancers 5 (Hendrick 13, 52, Brinkman 35, 47, Anand Bir 48) drew with Delhi SG Pipers 5 (Domene 18, 30, Weyer 35, Yamasaki 23, Dhrjaj 37). Lancers bt Pipers 3-2 via shootout.

Yibbi's brace powers Warriors to top spot

Y.B. Sarangi

BANGALORE

Yibbi Janssen's double penalty corner conversion propelled Odisha Warriors to a 4-1 win over Shrawari Rathi Bengal Tigers in the women's competition of the Hockey India League at the Birsu Munda Hockey Stadium here on Sunday.

Warriors' third victory in front of their home crowd took them to the top of the table.

Tigers replied by launching some raids, led by Hannah Cotter. At the stroke of the first break, Tigers earned a short corner which resulted in a strike before being cancelled by Warriors' defence.

Warriors showed better coordination while attacking with more intensity in the second quarter. The Dutch duo of Yibbi and Michelle Fillet combined beautifully to draw first blood. Yibbi sent in a diagonal pass from half-line and Michelle unleashed a cracking shot from top of the circle to score a spectacular goal.

Just before half-time, Tigers pulled one back as Udita Siddiqui foxed Jocelyn Bartram with a grounder off a penalty corner



Stealing the show: Yibbi leads the celebration after scoring her second goal. BY MOORTHY

and made some justice to her team's 75 per cent possession at the halfway mark.

Amid interceptions and counters from both sides, Lakshmi boosted Tigers' attack in the third quarter. Warriors' circle parties got them two more penalty corners.

Yibbi showcased another low drag-kick and Neha struck home in the final period to seal the league for Warriors.

The results: Odisha Warriors 4 (Yibbi 18, 47, Neha 58) bt Shrawari Rathi Bengal Tigers 1 (Udita 30).

SNAPSHOTS

Gukesh turns the tables on Giri in opener World AAN 20: World champion D. Gukesh battled back from a tough position to beat Anish Giri in the first round of the Tata Steel Masters on Saturday.

The results: Round 1: Masters: D. Gukesh bt Anish Giri 2-0; Harkrishna bt Arjun Erigaisi; Leon Luke Mendonca bt Vincent Keymer; Pragnanandhaa drew with Nodirbek Abdurboev; Wei Yi drew with Fabiano Caruana; Max Warmerdam drew with Aleksey Saravay; Jordan van Foreest drew with Vladimir Fedoseev.

Challengers: Divya Deshmukh lost to Nodirbek Abdurboev; Oro Fastline lost to R. Vaishali; Nguyen Thai Van Dam bt Arthur Bischoff; Aydin Salimov drew with Benjamin Bok; Ediz Gurbuz bt Irena Suljagic; Ewin Van Den Veyweghe drew with Frederic Swan; Mlayi Lu bt Nodirbek Abdurboev.

FC Goa scrapes past East Bengal, climbs to second in the table FAFOKATA: FC Goa rode on Ericson Fernandes' 13th minute goal to beat East Bengal FC 1-0 and move to the second spot in the I-League on Sunday. It was Goa's eighth win of the season and took it to 30 points in 16 matches.

For Bristol, it was his sixth goal in the season. Goa will next play Chennaiyin FC on Jan. 25 while East Bengal will face Kerala Blasters FC on Jan. 24.

Further turmoil for United and Spurs



Final net: Georginio Rutter sealed the win for Brighton. REUTERS

EURO LEAGUES

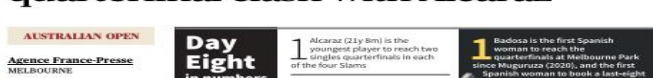
Associated Press

Manchester United's season lurched further into turmoil Sunday after a 3-1 loss to Brighton in the Premier League. Goals from Yankuba Minteh, Kaoru Mitoma and Georginio Rutter at Old Trafford consigned United to a 10th defeat in the league. Bruno Fernandes scored for United from the penalty spot.

Tottenham's woeful campaign also sunk to new depths with a 3-2 loss at relegation-fighting Everton, but Nottingham Forest's unlikely title challenge goes from strength to strength after a 3-2 win against last-placed Southampton.

The results: Premier League: Everton 3, (Calvert-Lewin 13, Ndayishimiye 30, Gray 43+7+pg) bt Tottenham 2 (Pullis 10, 77, Richardson 90+2); Manchester

Djokovic sets up mouthwatering quarterfinal clash with Alcaraz



AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Alexis France-Press: Novak Djokovic surged into an Australian Open quarterfinal clash against Carlos Alcaraz with a dominant straight-sets victory on Sunday while women's World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka was a ruthless winner.

On the hottest day of the tournament, Alcaraz went through when Britain's Jack Draper retired injured. The 37-year-old Djokovic then kept up his end of the bargain with a 6-3, 6-4, 7-6(4) win over Czech 24th seed Jiri Lehecka in the prime-time match on Rod Laver Arena.

The 21-year-old Alcaraz, who has never gone beyond the quarterfinals in Melbourne, was leading 7-5, 6-1 when Draper pulled the plug. A dangerous Paula Badosa after fighting back to beat Belinda Bencic 5-7, 6-2, 6-1. Badosa was a 6-1, 7-6(2) winner over Serbia's Olga Danilovic.

Russian 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva 6-1, 6-2 in a chilling warning to sweep into the quarterfinals in Melbourne, was leading 7-5, 6-1 when Draper pulled the plug. A dangerous Paula Badosa after fighting back to beat Belinda Bencic 5-7, 6-2, 6-1. Badosa was a 6-1, 7-6(2) winner over Serbia's Olga Danilovic.

Smooth sailing for favourites on day one



AMOL KARHADKAR SURAT

The 86th senior National table tennis championship started off on an expected note, with the favourites sailing through most of the team championship league stage proceedings at the Pandit Dinkarji Udayshay Indoor Stadium here.

Men's defending champion Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) crushed Uttarakhnad and Chhattisgarh to enter the knockout.

Telangana, meanwhile, overcame Andhra Pradesh 3-0 in the clash of the neighbours clubbed together in Group G to improve its chance of entering the round of 16. The most entertaining tie of the day saw Sushana Saini starting to help Haryana edge past Uttar Pradesh 3-2 in a women's Group C tie.

Day Eight in numbers. 1 Alcaraz (21y 8m) is the youngest player to reach two singles quarterfinals in each of the four Slams. 2 Paul (27y 8m) is the youngest American to advance to his second singles quarterfinal at Melbourne Park since Roddick (22y 4m) in 2004. 8 The number of times Gauff has made it to the last eight at a Slam before turning 21, a record bettered only by Sharapova (12), Serena (9) and Clijsters (9). 15 Djokovic has equalled Federer's quarterfinal appearances at the Australian Open. 20 Djokovic is only the second player after Federer to progress to the singles quarterfinals of at least one Slam across 20 seasons. 64 Alcaraz trails only McEnroe (10) for most singles victories at Slams after 73 matches. 105 Zverev now has the second-most wins (105 - tied with Nadal) among German men at Majors. Victor (18) is the most titles won by a player. All stats pertain to Open Era. Monday's Fourth Round: 1-Sinner vs Ruuska, 8-Dimitrov vs McEnroe, 25-Sestroten vs Melnikova, 30-Moskera vs Tseng. Top Results: Men: Fourth round: 7-Djokovic 7-5, 6-1 when Draper pulled the plug; 6-3, 6-4, 7-6(4); 3-Alcaraz (Esp) bt 11-Draper (GB) 7-5, 6-1, ret.; 12-Paul (USA) bt Bawadashvili; 6-Fokina (Esp) 6-1, 6-1, 6-1; 2-Zverev (Ger) bt 14-Humbert (Fra) 6-1, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2. Women: Fourth round: 1-Sabalenka (Bel) bt 14-Andreeva (Rus) 6-1, 6-0; 2-Andreeva (Rus) bt 18-Vekic (Cro) 7-6(0), 6-0; 11-Badosa (Esp) bt Danilovic (Bel) 6-1, 7-6(2), 3-Gauff (USA) bt Bencic (Sui) 3-7, 6-2, 6-1. Mixed doubles: Second round: Wang (Chi) & Popovkina (Uzb) w/o Townsend (USA) & Nys (Mon).

Important results: Women's Group A: RSPB bt Goa 3-0, Chandigarh bt J&K 3-0, RSPB bt Chandigarh 3-0. Group B: PSPB bt Madhya Pradesh 3-0, PSPB bt Assam 3-0, Madhya Pradesh bt Lakshadweep 3-0, Karnataka bt J&K 3-0. Group C: Tamil Nadu bt Meghalaya 3-0, Andhra Pradesh bt Manipal 3-0, Tamil Nadu bt Jharkhand 3-0, Maharashtra bt Jharkhand 3-0, Maharashtra bt Odisha 1-1. Group D: Delhi bt Himachal Pradesh 3-0, Delhi bt Gujarat 3-0, Pondicherry bt Himachal Pradesh 3-0. Group E: West Bengal bt TTFI 3-0. Group F: PSPB bt Kerala 3-0, RSPB bt Odisha 3-0. Group G: Delhi bt Himachal Pradesh 3-0, Delhi bt Gujarat 3-0, Pondicherry bt Himachal Pradesh 3-0. Group H: West Bengal bt TTFI 3-0. Group I: Maharashtra bt Bihar 3-0, Karnataka bt J&K 3-0. Group J: Maharashtra bt Karnataka 3-0. Group K: Maharashtra bt Nagaland 3-0, Tamil Nadu bt Madhya Pradesh 3-0. Group L: Maharashtra bt Jharkhand 3-0, Maharashtra bt Andaman & Nicobar 3-0, Haryana bt Chandigarh 3-0, Telangana bt Andhra Pradesh 3-0. Group M: Haryana bt Uttar Pradesh 3-2, Uttarakhnad bt...

SUPER SUNDAY

Indian men beat Nepal in final to ring in the double cheer



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

India completed the double at the kho kho World Cup as the men followed the women in lifting silverware in New Delhi on Sunday. Up against Nepal in the final, the men won 54-36 to live up to the expectations of a buoyant crowd. Captain Pratik Waikar was one of the star performers for the men's team.

Axelsen and Young stamp their class

The Dane secured his third India Open title to equal Malaysian Lee Chong Wei's record; the Korean was dominant in the women's section

BADMINTON

Uthra Ganesan

NEW DELHI

After a week of long-drawn matches, upset wins and local heartbreaks, the finals of the India Open on Sunday were anti-climactic with four of the summit clashes decided in straight games. Viktor Axelsen and An Se Young lived up to their pre-tournament favourites tag, registering comprehensive one-sided wins to clinch men's and women's India Open badminton titles respectively here on Sunday.

While Axelsen sent last year's runner-up Cheuk Yiu Lee of Singapore packing 21-16, 21-9 in 41 minutes



All smiles: Axelsen and Young strike a happy pose after claiming the singles titles. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

to wrap up a 21-12, 21-9 victory against Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong for her second after 2023. In the process, Axelsen also secured his first world

trasting time since their Paris triumph but at the packed K.D. Jadhav Indoor Hall, they hit their strides to stamp their dominance in similar style at the Sun-



ris – Axelsen has been struggling with injuries, training and motivation, even pulling out of the year-end World Championship Finals in December

slowly and being erratic, the 2017 and 2019 champion trailed 2-6 before levelling at 7-7, then reeled off six points to go 13-8 up before winning 21-16, 21-12

cond, running away with the game and the title to take home a prize purse of \$66,500 and 11,000 ranking points.

An Se, who has never lost to Pornpawee in their nine previous meetings, extended her dominance to 10-0 in just 39 minutes, taking control early on for a 6-1 lead before winning 21-12. The second game was no different, An Se leading 7-1 before closing the match at 21-12, not having dropped a single game in her 10 matches this year.

The results (finals): Men: Viktor Axelsen (Den) bt Cheuk Yiu Lee (Sgp) 21-16, 21-8; **Doubles:** Sze Fei Goh & Nur Izzuddin (Mal) bt Won Ho Kim & Seung Jae Seo (Kor) 21-15, 13-21, 21-16. **Women:** An Se Young (Kor) bt Pornpawee Chochuwong (Tha) 21-12, 21-9; **Doubles:** Arisa

● India's spends on education

SINCE THE KOTHARI Commission's report in 1966 and the first National Policy on Education in 1968, policy experts have been stressing that national public expenditure on education must be at 6% of GDP. However, trends have shown that while private expenditure on education has increased since 1968, the same is not true for public expenditure. According to a 2024 study by Venkatanarayana Motkuri and E Revathi published in the Indian Public Policy Review, "The per capita public expenditure on education was 0.7 times that of the private [sector] and the ratio increased to 2.3 in early 1990s. Such a ratio is gradually declining since 1990s, and it is 1.5 at present." Currently, the total budgeted expenditure on education is about 3.5% of GDP; the Centre bears 25% of the total government spending on education, with the rest coming from the States. The Union Budget 2024 allocated ₹1,25,638 crore for education, with the bulk going to school education. The department of school education was allocated ₹73,498 crore, of which ₹37,010 crore was allocated to the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan, the Centre's flagship school education scheme.



UNION BUDGET & EDUCATION

Shifting the focus from outlays to outcomes

While budgetary outlay for education remains much less than the 6% of GDP ideal, what's more important is utilising the allocated funds efficiently and innovatively, whether in school education or higher education, to ensure positive learning and employment outcomes, explains *Anvitti Rai*

₹1.26 Lcr

BUDGET 2024
ALLOCATION FOR
EDUCATION, OF WHICH
₹73,498 CR WENT TO
SCHOOL EDUCATION

ABOUT ONE IN TWO
ARE NOT YET READILY
EMPLOYABLE
STRAIGHT OUT OF
COLLEGE, SAID THE
ECONOMIC SURVEY
FOR FY 23-24

2000

UNIVERSITIES
NEEDED TO ENSURE
50% OF STUDENTS
CAN ACCESS HIGHER
EDUCATION

● Unemployable graduates

THE PROBLEM OF poor quality of education gets worse when it comes to higher education. While we have more than 70,000 higher education institutions, 'about one in two are not yet readily employable straight out of college', the Economic Survey for FY24 had pointed out. The disconnect between degrees and employability has been pointed out several times by industry chiefs. A TeamLease study had warned that only 10% of the successful 15 lakh engineering graduates in 2024 were likely to find a job. The future of education is about creating a learning ecosystem that bridges academic theory with real-world industry skills. "Work-linked degrees represent more than a trend. They need to be considered as a strategic response to the rapidly evolving job market, where adaptability and practical expertise are becoming as crucial as traditional academic credentials," Jaideep Kewalramani, COO and head of employability business at TeamLease Edtech, had told *FE* recently.

● Reforms in higher education

THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS Commission (UGC) Draft Regulations 2025 seems to be making a start here —the stated aim is to address faculty shortages (33% and 29% teaching positions across central universities and NITs are vacant), lack of multi-disciplinary courses, outdated evaluation metrics and inflexible governance structures. More funds along with a policy rethink can help. Budget 2024 had brought down the funding for UGC by 61%. On the other hand, the grants for central universities saw an increase of over ₹4,000 crore. NITI Aayog

● Internships & industrial training

ASSORTED GOVERNMENT SCHEMES are aiming to make the workforce more employable. A start has been made with the PM Internship Scheme announced in Budget 2024; the programme kicked off in December last year with interns from 656 districts embarking on their internship journeys with top companies. The pilot phase of the scheme intends to provide 1.25 lakh internships across 24 sectors with 10 million youth to be trained over a five-year period. It is now to be seen whether the coming Budget builds on this.

Budget 2024 had announced that 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes would be upgraded; outdated curriculum, lack of industry-specific training, poor perception of students among companies, weak industry engagement, had made them the last port of call for any worthy student. ₹1000 crore had been allotted for this in FY25, however, not much has happened on that front. The coming Budget will need to prioritise this.

CEO BVR Subrahmanyam had recently emphasised the need to double the number of universities to 2,500 to ensure 50% of students can access higher education; only 29% of the age-eligible population currently enrolls in universities. Promoting public-private collaborations can help here. With higher education increasingly expensive, financial support becomes essential. Budget 2024 had announced loans up to ₹10 lakh to students for higher education in domestic institutions, more needs to be done on that front.

● Current status of school education

WHILE UNIVERSAL EDUCATION is the goal of the National Education Policy 2020, the poor quality of school education continues to be a sad reality. The latest data from the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) of the education ministry indicate that we continue to

grapple with low enrolment, retention of students, and infrastructure challenges. Gross enrolment ratio at the secondary level is 66.5% while the dropout ratio is 10.9%. As the Annual State of Education Report 2024 revealed, though 86.8% of 14-18-year-olds are enrolled in a school,

25% of them cannot read a standard II-level text fluently in their regional language. "At a state level, 80-90% of the money goes into paying teachers and paying pensions, and less money goes to pedagogy," says Amit Chandra, CEO, Centre for Civil Society.

A vibrant space scene featuring a large, reddish-brown planet in the upper left, a smaller, greyish planet in the lower right, and two bright yellow stars. The background is a deep blue and purple space filled with numerous small white stars. The text "Planet Parade" is centered in white.

Planet Parade



- In January 2025, Venus, Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars have aligned spectacularly in the night sky, creating a rare celestial phenomenon known as a “planet parade.

03:30



URANUS
JUPITER • MERCURY

MOON

MARS

NEPTUNE

SATURN

NORTH
EAST

EAST

SOUTH
EAST



- What is a Planet Parade?

- A **planet parade** occurs when several planets in the solar system are visible simultaneously in the night sky.
- It is not an official astronomical term but describes the alignment of planets along the **plane of the solar system**.
- These alignments can occur in either the **morning or evening sky**.



- How does a planet parade occur?

- Planets orbit the Sun on approximately the same plane, known as the **ecliptic plane**, making them appear aligned in the sky.
- Due to their varying orbital speeds and distances, this alignment is temporary and visible only for specific periods.
- The current alignment features **Venus, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Uranus, and Neptune**, forming a curved arc across the sky.



Kokborok

- **Kokborok day** is celebrated by the Indigenous Tripuri people of the state of Tripura on **19th January each year.**
- **About**
- **Significance:** It commemorates the rich cultural heritage, history, and linguistic contributions of the Kokborok language, which is the mother tongue of the Tripuri people.
- It was first recognised as an **official state language of Tripura in 1979.**
 - Other official languages of Tripura are Bengali and English.
- Tripura has rolled out a **language mapping drive to boost Kokborok in schools.**
-



Zombie Deer Disease (CWD)

A recent study has concluded that humans are not at significant risk of contracting the deadly **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)**, often referred to as **Zombie Deer Disease**.

Zombie Deer Disease (CWD)

It is also known as **Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)**.

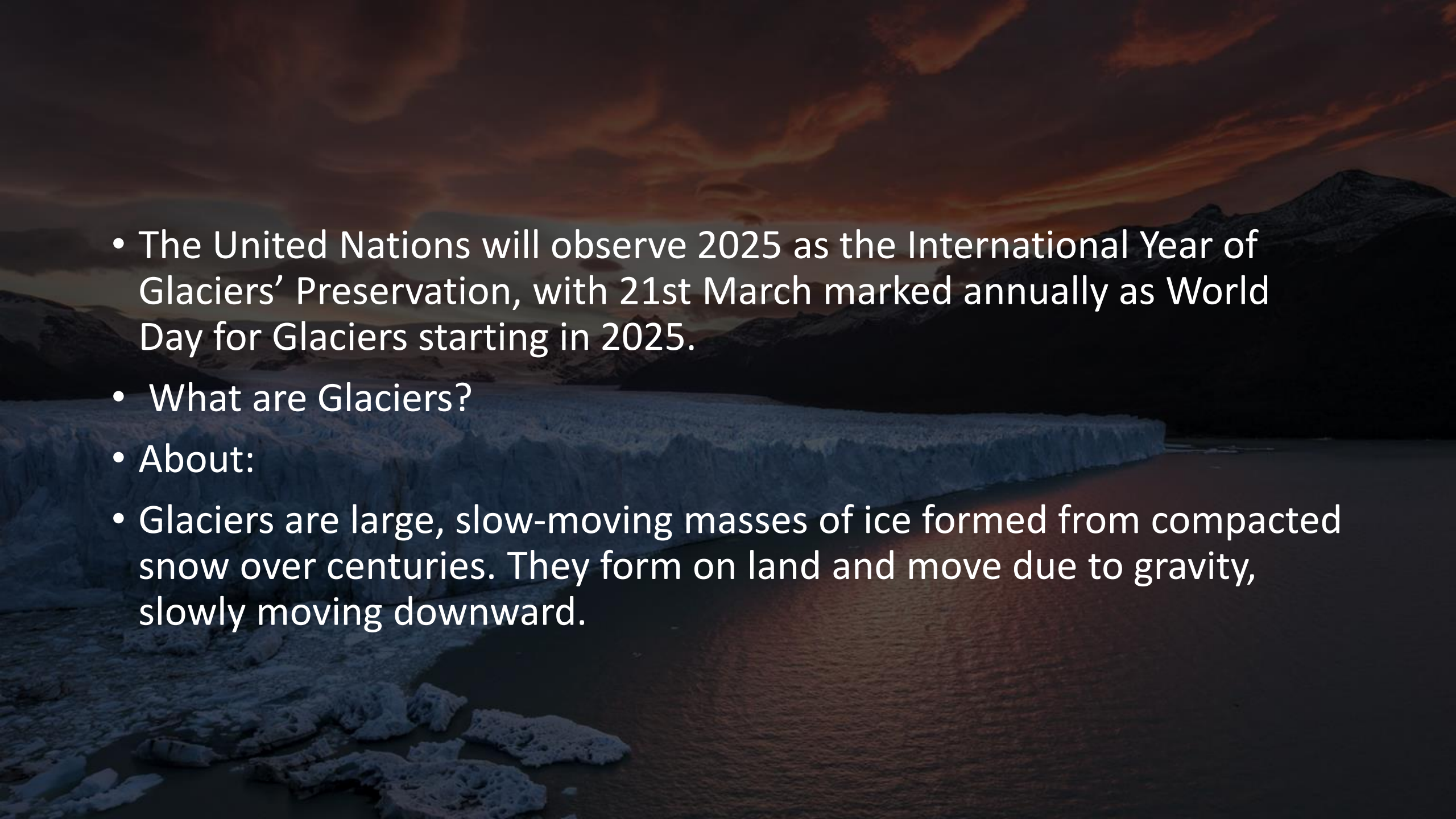
It is a deadly, neurological illness that affects deer, elk, moose, reindeer, and muntjac.

- It may also affect some other members of the Cervidae family.

- **Human Infection Risk:** CWD is caused by prions, infectious proteins, and there are concerns about the disease potentially jumping to humans, particularly through the consumption of infected meat.
 - However, no confirmed human cases have been reported.
- **Transmission :** CWD prions spread through body fluids such as saliva, blood, urine, and feces, either by direct contact or environmental contamination.
 - Once present, prions remain infectious for years in soil, water, and plants.



2025 as International Year of Glaciers' Preservation

- 
- The United Nations will observe 2025 as the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation, with 21st March marked annually as World Day for Glaciers starting in 2025.
 - What are Glaciers?
 - About:
 - Glaciers are large, slow-moving masses of ice formed from compacted snow over centuries. They form on land and move due to gravity, slowly moving downward.

- 
- **Historical Context:** Most glaciers today are **remnants** of the massive ice sheets that covered Earth during the **Ice Age (around 10,000 years ago)**.
 - During Earth's history, there have been **glacial periods (or ice ages)** when glaciers formed and **interglacial periods** when glaciers melted.

- 
- **Note:** There are over **275,000 glaciers** globally, covering approximately **700,000 sq km** of land.
 - **Ice sheets** store around **70% of the world's freshwater**, highlighting the importance of glaciers for global water supply.
 -

- 
- Hindu Kush Himalayas
 - **About:** Hindu Kush Himalayas is a mountain range stretching over **3500 kilometres** and across eight countries i.e., **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Myanmar and Pakistan.**
 - It is home to all of the world's peaks **above 7,000 metres.**



-
- **Water Tower of Asia:** It is called the 'Water Tower of Asia' as it is an important source of water for **12 river basins**, including **10 major (transboundary) rivers**:
 - the Amu Darya, **Brahmaputra**, **Ganges**, **Indus**, **Irrawaddy**, **Mekong**, **Salween**, **Tarim**, **Yangtse**, and **Yellow (Huang He)**.
 - They flow through **16 countries in Asia** and provide freshwater services to **240 million people** living in the HKH region and **1.65 billion downstream**.

-

Word of the day

Widget:

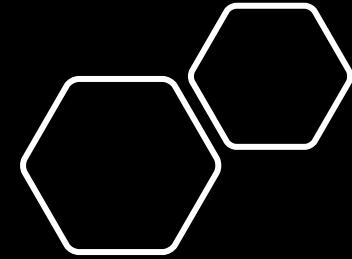
something unspecified whose name is either forgotten or not known; a device or control that is very useful for a particular job

Synonyms: appliance, contraption, convenience, gadget

Usage: *These widgets are now more technologically advanced.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/widgetpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /'wɪdʒ.ɪt/





Fun Fact

One of the Oldest Democracies in Asia

- The first **Asian country to hold democratic elections in 1931**, introducing universal adult suffrage even before many Western nations.

A blurred photograph of a modern office interior. In the background, several people are seated around a long wooden table, engaged in a meeting. The scene is brightly lit by large windows, creating a soft, out-of-focus atmosphere. The text "Top 10 MCQ from the session for every exam" is overlaid in the center in a white, sans-serif font.

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

- What is the primary objective of the SVAMITVA scheme?
- स्वामित्व योजना का प्राथमिक उद्देश्य क्या है?
- A. To provide urban housing to the poor / गरीबों को शहरी आवास प्रदान करना
- B. To map and record property rights in rural areas using drone technology / ड्रोन तकनीक का उपयोग करके ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में संपत्ति अधिकारों का मानचित्रण और रिकॉर्ड करना
- C. To promote foreign investment in real estate / रियल एस्टेट में विदेशी निवेश को बढ़ावा देना
- D. To provide government subsidies for housing construction / आवास निर्माण के लिए सरकारी सब्सिडी प्रदान करना

- How many property cards were distributed under the SVAMITVA scheme by PM Modi?
- प्रधानमंत्री मोदी द्वारा स्वामित्व योजना के तहत कितने संपत्ति कार्ड वितरित किए गए?
- A. 50 lakh
- B. 55 lakh
- C. 60 lakh
- D. 65 lakh

- What major benefit does the SVAMITVA scheme provide to rural property owners?
- स्वामित्व योजना ग्रामीण संपत्ति मालिकों को कौन सा प्रमुख लाभ प्रदान करती है?
- A. Ability to use property as collateral for loans / संपत्ति को ऋण के लिए गारंटी के रूप में उपयोग करने की क्षमता
- B. Free housing grants / निःशुल्क आवास अनुदान
- C. Automatic land ownership without verification / बिना सत्यापन के स्वतः भूमि स्वामित्व
- D. Permanent exemption from property tax / संपत्ति कर से स्थायी छूट

- Which country became a full BRICS member from January 1, 2024?
- 1 जनवरी 2024 से कौन सा देश BRICS का पूर्ण सदस्य बन गया?
- A. Egypt / मिस्र
- B. Indonesia / इंडोनेशिया
- C. Bangladesh / बांग्लादेश
- D. Turkey / तुर्की

- What is the role of Indian pharmaceutical companies in obesity drug development?
- भारतीय फार्मा कंपनियों की मोटापा-रोधी दवा के विकास में क्या भूमिका है?
- A. Developing affordable generic versions of Wegovy and Ozempic / वेगोवी और ओज़ेम्पिक की किफायती जेनेरिक संस्करण विकसित करना
B. Creating new vaccines for weight loss / वजन घटाने के लिए नए टीके बनाना
C. Exporting US-made obesity drugs to India / अमेरिका निर्मित मोटापा-रोधी दवाओं का भारत में निर्यात करना
D. Reducing diabetes-related medicines / मधुमेह संबंधित दवाओं को कम करना

- What is the "Planet Parade" phenomenon?
- "प्लैनेट परेड" घटना क्या है?
- A. The simultaneous visibility of multiple planets in the night sky / एक साथ कई ग्रहों की रात के आकाश में दृश्यता
- B. A solar eclipse visible from different continents / विभिन्न महाद्वीपों से दिखाई देने वाला सूर्य ग्रहण
- C. A meteor shower occurring twice a year / वर्ष में दो बार होने वाली उल्का वर्षा
- D. Alignment of the planets with the Milky Way / ग्रहों का मिल्की वे के साथ संरेखण

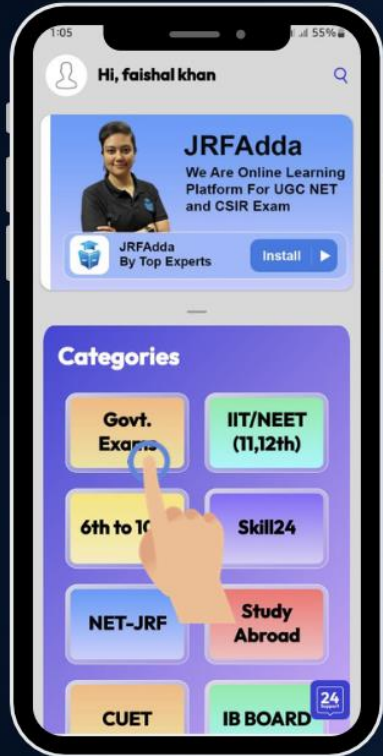
- Which Indian state celebrates Kokborok Day on January 19?
- कौन सा भारतीय राज्य 19 जनवरी को कोकबोरोक दिवस मनाता है?
- A. Assam / असम
- B. Tripura / त्रिपुरा
- C. Manipur / मणिपुर
- D. Meghalaya / मेघालय

- What is Zombie Deer Disease (CWD)?
- ज़ोंबी डियर डिजीज (CWD) क्या है?
- A. A viral disease affecting deer and elk / हिरण और एल्क को प्रभावित करने वाली एक वायरल बीमारी
- B. A brain-wasting disease caused by prions / प्रायन द्वारा उत्पन्न मस्तिष्क-अपक्षयी रोग
- C. A rare genetic disorder in wildlife / वन्यजीवों में एक दुर्लभ आनुवंशिक विकार
- D. A bacterial infection found in cold regions / ठंडे क्षेत्रों में पाई जाने वाली एक बैक्टीरियल संक्रमण

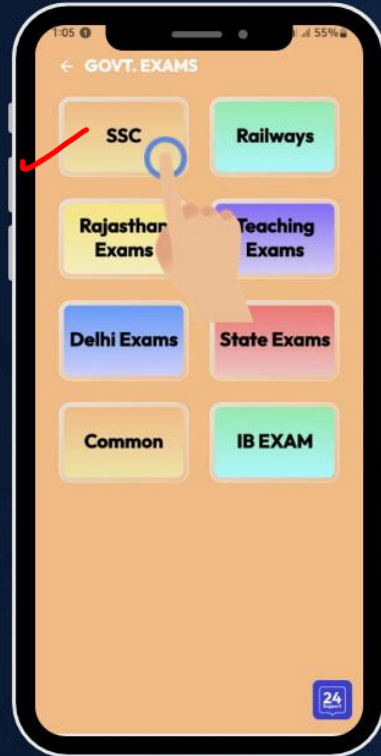
- What is the theme of the UN's 2025 "International Year of Glaciers' Preservation"?
- संयुक्त राष्ट्र के 2025 "अंतर्राष्ट्रीय हिमनद संरक्षण वर्ष" की थीम क्या है?
- A. "Protecting the Planet's Water Towers" / "ग्रह के जल स्रोतों की सुरक्षा"
- B. "Glacier Preservation for Future Generations" / "भविष्य की पीढ़ियों के लिए हिमनद संरक्षण"
- C. "Save the Glaciers, Save the World" / "हिमनद बचाओ, दुनिया बचाओ"
- D. "Water Conservation and Ice Protection" / "जल संरक्षण और बर्फ की सुरक्षा"

- Which mountain range is called the "Water Tower of Asia"?
- कौन सा पर्वत श्रृंखला "एशिया का जल स्तंभ" कहा जाता है?
- A. Karakoram Range / काराकोरम रेंज
- B. Hindu Kush Himalayas / हिंदू कुश हिमालय
- C. Pamir Mountains / पामीर पर्वत
- D. Altai Mountains / अल्ताई पर्वत

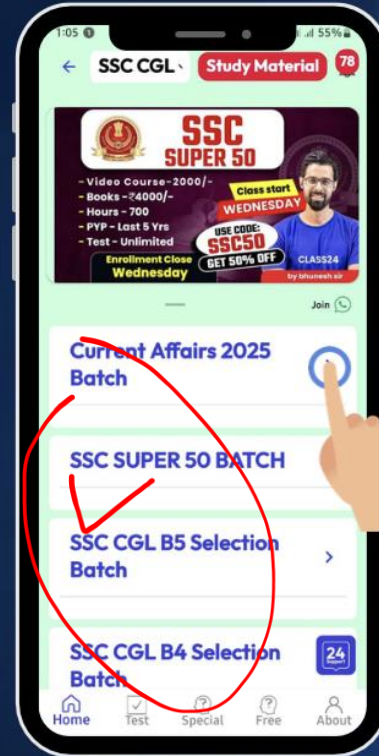
Step 1



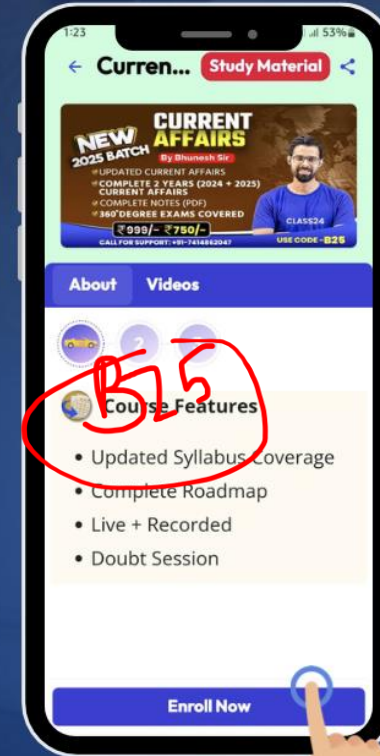
Step 2




Step 3



Step 4





Thank you
guys.
