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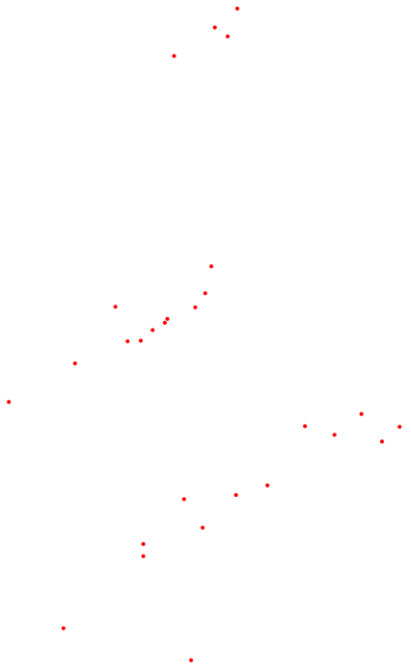
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The aim of the wise is not to secure pleasure, but to avoid pain.

~ Aristotle




OWNERSHIP PLANS
U.S. can run Kyiv's power plants: Trump
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A delimitation red flag
Threat of communal demarcation of electoral constituencies
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BACK WITH A BANG
Chhetri on target as India blanks Maldives
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INSIDE



Talks between farmers, Centre inconclusive

CHANDIGARH
A fresh round of meeting between farmer leaders and a central delegation to discuss various demands remained inconclusive on Wednesday, even as the Ministers attending the talks called the farmers' interests paramount. > PAGE 2

ASHAs in Kerala to go on hunger strike from today

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
The Accredited Social Health Activists in Kerala will begin their hunger strike on Thursday as talks with National Health Mission authorities and the State Health Minister failed to break the impasse. > PAGE 3

Technology can't replace boots on the ground: CDS

NEW DELHI
Boots on the ground cannot be replaced and technology will only be an enabler, the Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, said at the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi on Wednesday. > PAGE 6

Fugitive police chief surrenders in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO
Sri Lanka's fugitive police chief Deshabandu Tennakoon on Wednesday surrendered at a magistrate court in the southern Marata district, after evading arrest for more than a fortnight. > PAGE 14

NASA's astronauts stranded in space for 9 months returned to earth by SpaceX ship

Agence France-Presse WASHINGTON

Home at last: After an unexpected nine-month stay in space, a pair of NASA astronauts finally returned to earth on Indian time Wednesday, concluding a mission that gripped global attention.

A SpaceX Crew Dragon spaceship carrying Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams — alongside fellow American Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov — descended through the atmosphere before deploying parachutes for a gentle splashdown off the Florida coast at 3.27 a.m. IST. Ground teams erupted in cheers as the spacecraft named Freedom, chartered from withdrawing scorching temperatures of 2,000 degrees Celsius during re-

Days after peace deal, clashes in Manipur kill one

Curbs under Section 163 of BNSS imposed in Churachandpur as Hmar and Zomi communities renew hostilities; Kuki-Zo MLAs call for peace; the unrest which arose from the assault on Richard Hmar, of the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum, was expected to have been resolved when the Hmar Inpu and Zomi Council signed a pact on Monday

The Hindu Bureau GUWAHATI

Fresh clashes broke out between the Hmar and Zomi communities in the remote Churachandpur district of Manipur on Wednesday, hours after a peace settlement between their apex bodies.

A 53-year-old person was killed in the violence. Officials said the Hmars opposed a Zomi group's hoisting of their community flag on Tuesday evening. The clashes that ensued killed Lalropui Pakhumate on the outskirts of Churachandpur town.

The district authorities imposed restrictions under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita after the incident.

On Monday, the Hmar Inpu and the Zomi Council agreed to work together for peace after the assault on a Hmar leader triggered

clashes between the two communities. Six Kuki-Zo MLAs issued an appeal for calm.

"Peace an harmony" "We urge our community leaders and civil society organisations to continue to work hard to maintain peace and tranquillity. We urge the State government, particularly the district administration, to take up all requisite measures for restoration and maintenance of law and order and peace and harmony," the MLAs said in a joint statement.

The district's Deputy Commissioner, Dharmu Kumar S., issued his second appeal for peace in three days.

Organisations such as the Kuki Inpu, Hmar Women Association, and Zomi Mothers' Association condemned all forms of violence, including hate speech and destruction of property, while pledging to



Fresh clashes: Tensions erupted in Churachandpur of Manipur on Tuesday night. SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT

work towards non-violence. The Zomi Students' Federation declared an "indefinite emergency shutdown" in Churachandpur on Wednesday.

Churachandpur town is dominated by the Zomis while Hmars primarily live

on the outskirts. The tensions made authorities shift some Kuki-Zo people, displaced during the ethnic violence with Meiteis in 2023, from the New Bazaar relief camp in Churachandpur town to another relief camp at a speech in the district. Tin-

gionlei Thangthual, Medical Superintendent of the District Hospital in Churachandpur, said a mob barged into the hospital around 9 p.m. on Tuesday and set the staff on fire. "...this unhealthy atmosphere of rumours prevented many of them

from carrying out their normal duty from today (Wednesday). As a consequence, all operations were cancelled today due to a lack of OT (operation theatre) staff and technicians. The hospital wards and OPDs suffer the same," the Medical Superintendent said in a statement.

Customary law Security forces conducted flag marches in and around Churachandpur, asking people to remain indoors to help restore peace and normalcy.

The unrest arising out of the assault on Richard Hmar, a member of the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum on Sunday, was expected to have been nipped in the bud when the Hmar Inpu and the Zomi Council signed the agreement on Tuesday to end hostilities.

The two organisations also resolved to settle the

assault issue through tribal customary laws.

Accordingly, the attacker's family agreed to pay ₹50,000 to the kin of Richard Hmar to organise a traditional and customary peace feast. The two sides also agreed that the attacker's family would pay ₹2 lakh for the Hmar leader's treatment and provide more money if needed.

More than 250 people have been killed and 60,000 rendered homeless in Manipur since the ethnic conflict between the non-tribal Meiteis and Kuki-Zos broke out in May 2023. Hmars and Zomis are considered constituents of the Kuki-Zo tribal group.

President's Rule was imposed in Manipur and the 60-member State Assembly was put in suspended animation as the Chief Minister Thombam Biren Singh resigned as the Chief Minister on February 13.

Cattle in colour



Devotees with bullocks covered in colour arrive to participate in the Bagad Rath Yatra festival at Bavdhan in Satara, Maharashtra, on Wednesday. The sacred Bagad or chariot is pulled by eight bullocks out of hundreds brought for the festival. PTI

Peace returns to Nagpur; police detain 84 people, file more FIRs on violence

Yinaya Deshpande Pandit, Abhinav Deshpande MUMBAI/NAGPUR

Even as peace returns to Nagpur, the police took more people into custody on Wednesday in connection with the violence that broke out in the city on Monday following protests by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Dal demanding removal of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's name from the calligraphic inscription over burning of a holy cloth.

So far, 84 people have been taken into custody, including seven minors, and 29 of them were produced in court on Wednesday and remanded in police custody till March 21. Minority Democratic Party leader Fahim Khan is among those who have been arrested, after he was allegedly seen "actively trying to provoke people" in



As the dust settles: Police personnel deployed to maintain law and order in the Chitnis Park area of Nagpur on Wednesday. PTI

the city. The police are preparing to file more FIRs regarding the circulation of unverified clips and social media content. "We are in the process of registering a few more FIRs for cyber-related crimes. We have taken more people into custody today," Nagpur Police Commissioner Ravinder Singh told *The Hindu*.

Maharashtra's Anti-Terror Squad will also look into the case, in parallel with the police investigation. "This is a routine procedure about communal tensions," an officer privy to the police investigation told *The Hindu*.

According to the Ganeshpeth police station, a mob of people shouting provocative slogans and hurling stones



targeted the woman constable, who was part of the Rapid Control Police (RCP) squad deployed to contain the violence. The complainant, a police officer, further states in the FIR that other women police personnel were subjected to similar harassment and intimidation by the rioters.

New Zealand, India should join security efforts: Luxon

Suhassini Haidar NEW DELHI

New Zealand and India "bookend" the Indo-Pacific region, and should work together on building security in the region, New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said in an exclusive interview to *The Hindu*.

Mr. Luxon, the chief guest at the Raisina Dialogue here this week, had met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to announce a defence deal and relaunch trade talks.

INTERVIEW ON PAGE 6



Mr. Wilmore and Ms. Williams, veterans of two prior space missions, flew to the orbital lab in June last year, on what was supposed to be a days-long roundtrip to test out Boeing's Starliner on its first crewed flight. But the spaceship developed problems and was deemed unfit to fly them back, instead returning empty.

Their 286-day stay exceeds the usual six-month ISS rotation but ranks only sixth among U.S. records for single-mission duration. Frank Rubio holds the top spot at 371 days in 2023, while the world record remains with Russian cosmonaut Valeri Polyakov, who spent 437 consecutive days aboard the Mir station.

OVER THE MOON > PAGE 2

entry, bobbed steadily on the waves.

As fast boats raced to the capsule for initial safety checks an unlikely escort arrived in the form of a playful pod of dolphins.

Soon after, a larger recovery vessel heeled Freedom aboard. Teams opened the hatch one by one, the astronauts were helped out onto mo-

bility aids, waving and flashing thumbs-up signs.

Next, they will fly down by helicopter to Houston, where they will be able to meet their families, and begin a physical rehabilitation programme. The team left the International Space Station roughly 17 hours earlier, exchanging final farewells and hugs with remaining crew members.

A case has also been registered against 500 to 600 unidentified persons. On Wednesday, the Judicial Magistrate First Class court remanded 19 of these accused to police custody until March 21 for further investigation.

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NASA's astronauts stranded in space for 9 months returned to earth by SpaceX ship

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

Home at last: After an unexpected nine-month stay in space, a pair of NASA astronauts finally returned to earth on Indian time Wednesday, concluding a mission that gripped global attention.

A SpaceX Crew Dragon spaceship carrying Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams – alongside fellow American Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov – streaked through the atmosphere before deploying parachutes for a gentle splashdown off the Florida coast at 3.27 a.m. IST. Ground teams erupted in cheers as the spacecraft named Freedom, charred from withstanding scorching temperatures of 2,000 degrees Celsius during re-



Back to base: Sunita Williams being helped out of a capsule after it landed off the Florida coast in U.S. on Wednesday. ANI

entry, bobbed steadily on the waves.

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Mr. Wilmore and Ms. Williams, veterans of two prior space missions, flew to the orbital lab in June last year, on what was supposed to be a days-long roundtrip to test out Boeing's Starliner on its first crewed flight. But the spaceship developed problems and was deemed unfit to fly them back, instead returning empty.

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OVER THE MOON
» PAGE 2

Astronauts' Extended Space Mission



Planned Short Mission

Astronauts were set for a brief mission.



Spacecraft Issues Arise

Technical problems occur with the spacecraft.



Extended Stay in Space

Astronauts remain in space for nine months.



SpaceX Crew Dragon Involvement

SpaceX's Crew Dragon facilitates their return.



The Return to Earth

- The SpaceX Crew Dragon carrying **Wilmore, Williams, Nick Hague (USA), and Aleksandr Gorbunov (Russia)** re-entered Earth's atmosphere.
- The spacecraft endured **2,000-degree Celsius** heat during reentry.
- It deployed **parachutes** for a **safe splashdown** in the **Florida coast** at **3:27 a.m. IST**.
- Rescue teams quickly secured the capsule, and **astronauts were helped out one by one**.

Unusual Mission Duration

- **Originally planned as a short test flight, their stay extended to 286 days.**
- **Standard International Space Station (ISS) rotations last 6 months, making this an exceptionally long mission.**
- **Their stay is among the top six longest NASA single-mission durations.**
- **Frank Rubio holds the U.S. record (371 days), while the world record (437 days) belongs to Russian cosmonaut Valeri Polyakov.**

A close-up, low-angle view of the External Tank and Solid Rocket Boosters of a Space Shuttle. The boosters are white with large, circular, dark-colored nozzle exits. The External Tank is a large, cylindrical structure in the center, also with circular openings. The background is a clear, light blue sky.

Challenges Faced

- The **Boeing Starliner spacecraft failed**, leaving the astronauts **without a return vehicle**.
- They were left dependent on alternative missions for a **safe return**.
- The long-duration mission required **psychological resilience** and additional **physical rehabilitation** upon return.

A silhouette of an astronaut in a full space suit standing on a dark, rocky surface, looking out over a hazy, orange-tinted horizon. The astronaut is positioned on the right side of the frame, with their back to the camera, looking towards the left. The background is a gradient of dark brown and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise on a planet's surface.

Recovery and Next Steps

- The astronauts will be **flown to Houston** to meet their families.
- They will undergo a **rehabilitation program** to recover from prolonged space exposure.
- The incident highlights **NASA's reliance on private companies (SpaceX and Boeing)** for space missions.

Implications for Future Missions

- **Reliability of Boeing's Starliner is under scrutiny** after the failure of its first crewed flight.
- SpaceX's Crew Dragon continues to be a **more dependable spacecraft** for ISS missions.
- Prolonged **astronaut stays pose medical and psychological challenges** for future deep-space missions (e.g., Mars).
- The success of the **Crew Dragon rescue mission** reinforces NASA's **collaboration with SpaceX**.

Is the APAAR ID for students mandatory?

What does APAAR stand for? What are its touted benefits? Are State governments and school authorities pushing for its large-scale adoption? Is the collection of personal data of minors without a backing law constitutional? What are digital activists saying?

EXPLAINER

Aroon Deep

The story so far:

Activists and parents are worried about the rapid push by schools to generate an APAAR ID. APAAR is part of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020's record-keeping reforms, and while it is voluntary, States and school authorities have pushed students to enrol in it.

What is the APAAR ID?

APAAR stands for Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry. The registry enables what the government describes as the 'One Nation, One Student ID', in order to "accumulate and store [students'] academic accomplishments, facilitating seamless transitions between institutions for the pursuit of further education". The APAAR ID is linked to Aadhaar and is stored in the DigiLocker. The registry provides students with standardised data on their marksheets and institutional affiliation. The system is touted as a way for different educational institutes to rapidly process and verify any given student's academic transcripts. APAAR is generated through the Unified District Information System For Education Plus (UDISE+) portal, which contains regional academic statistics and data on schools, teachers and students.

The ID is a key aspect of NEP 2020's mandate to overhaul education data collection for policymaking and analysis. The Education Ministry has been pushing schools affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to get "100% saturation" with respect to students registering for an APAAR ID.

Is APAAR mandatory?

APAAR is not mandatory, according to a document posted on the ID's official site. However, circulars by the CBSE, and FAQ pages that have been published by the government, do not make this clear. The



New IDs: Students at a school in Governor Peta, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh on March 15. G.N. RAO

government has instead described the benefits of APAAR to students, such as permanently recording data on "transfer from one school to the other, entrance examination, admission, job application, skilling, upskilling," and so on. While there is no law mandating its use, the CBSE and States like Uttar Pradesh have laid out expectations to schools, under their umbrella, that the ID should be issued to all students. Parents often do not receive any information which clearly spells out that the programme is voluntary. The Union government re-confirmed the optional nature of APAAR in response to a Parliament query in December 2024.

What about data security?

There is still a lack of clarity over the genesis of the APAAR programme. When the Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF)

attempted to file a Right to Information application on its policy documents, the Union government transferred the advocacy's application over 30 times, with no clear answer for months. "The datasets slated to be collected through APAAR enrolment are not limited to just educational certificates and grades, but spread far and wide," the IFF wrote in 2023. Besides, the large-scale collection of data of minors without a law to back it up, the IFF argues, is unconstitutional. Moreover, teachers have questioned the need for APAAR, arguing that the data that APAAR collects is already collated by teachers for the UDISE+, thus duplicating a significant amount of administrative work in schools.

"Additionally, Section 9(3) of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 specifically prohibits "tracking or behavioural monitoring of children or

targeted advertising directed at children" by entities," the IFF points out. "Having open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and channels of data sharing without any robust safeguards, can expose children's data to third parties who may use it for such purposes. Before it is rolled out, any such interfaces must be secured and legal safeguards put in place. There is an added responsibility on the APAAR framework to ensure cyber security, as the data being processed pertains to children..".

How is an APAAR ID generated?

Teachers and schools are taking the lead in guiding parents to generate an APAAR ID for students. Schools verify a student's "demographic details," that is, their name and date of birth. Parents are then required to fill a consent form, and after another step of authentication by the school, the APAAR ID is generated. Some parents have flagged issues regarding the mismatch of names in school records and identity documents. "The user must correct the inaccurate data and resubmit their request to generate the APAAR ID", an official document states.

Is there a way to opt out?

Parents have the option of writing to schools and opting out of generating the APAAR ID for children in their care. The Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC) has provided a template on its website which parents, wishing to opt out of the scheme, can edit and send to their schools.

However, recent developments are increasing pressure on parents and school authorities at the local level to ensure APAAR generation. For instance, Uttar Pradesh has warned of "mismatch" between APAAR generation and school enrolment data, in spite of the voluntary nature of the programme, and threatened to de-recognise some madarassas that have not started the process. A digital rights advocate said that so far, parents have had success in persuading schools to opt out by providing relevant paperwork to show the voluntary nature of APAAR.

THE GIST

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Parents have the option of writing to schools and opting out of generating the APAAR ID for children in their care.

Introduction to APAAR ID

- **APAAR (Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry)** is part of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**.
- It serves as a **unique student ID** under the concept of "**One Nation, One Student ID**".
- The system is meant to **store academic records**, facilitate **transitions between institutions**, and support **data analysis for policymaking**.
- The ID is linked to **Aadhaar** and stored in **DigiLocker**.

Is APAAR Mandatory?

- **Officially, APAAR is voluntary**, as stated on the **government's website**.
- However, schools and **State governments are actively pushing for 100% enrollment**.
- **CBSE circulates notices** that create an impression that APAAR is required.
- **No law mandates it**, making it legally **optional**.

How is APAAR ID Generated?

Schools collect **students' demographic details** (name, birth date, and Aadhaar).

Parental consent is required before final authentication.

Some **parents reported mismatches** between school records and Aadhaar details, leading to errors in ID generation.

The system does not issue an acknowledgment receipt, which creates **transparency concerns**.

Concerns About Data Security & Privacy

- **No clarity** on how long student data will be stored and **who has access**.
- The **Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF)** raised concerns about **bulk data collection without legal safeguards**.
- **Potential risks:**
 - **Third-party access** through APIs.
 - **Targeted advertising** using students' data.
 - **Tracking of students' personal details** over time.

Can Parents Opt Out?

- **Parents can opt out** by sending a written request to schools.
- **Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC)** offers a **template for opting out**.
- However, **State governments** like **Uttar Pradesh** are reportedly **forcing schools to ensure full APAAR registration**.
- **Schools that resist** have been **threatened with de-recognition**.

. Government's Stand on APAAR

- The Union government states it is voluntary but has not clarified policy details despite 30+ Right to Information (RTI) requests.**
- Parents and privacy activists remain skeptical about its true voluntary nature.**

What are the different risks and rewards of using UAVs?

Why are Unmanned Aerial Vehicles seen as less of a threat compared to inhabited or piloted fighter jets? How should India evolve as UAVs become integrated into military operations?

Adya Madhavan

The story so far:

The sight of two Chinese Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) over waters near Okinawa recently had Japan scrambling to pursue them. Yet, the level of alarm was considerably lower than what it would have been if the People's Liberation Army Air Force's piloted aircraft had been sighted near Japanese airspace. Arguably, in most cases, UAVs are seen as less of a threat than a fighter jet in the same context.

Why are UAVs seen as less of a threat?

Many features factor into this perception. UAVs are, by and large, less dangerous, since even those UAVs that are capable of carrying weapon payloads are still less capable than fighter jets; a large proportion of UAVs are not armed and

serve surveillance and reconnaissance purposes. Additionally, the lack of direct human presence makes them seem like less of an instrument of state power. By virtue of being unmanned, sending a UAV for a reconnaissance mission seems like a low-hanging fruit, where the mission may be just as effective without endangering human life, or risking an expensive inhabited aircraft. Even if UAVs are downed by enemy forces, they seem less of a burden financially.

Are there recent examples of this?

Instances of drones being shot down and met with a relatively restrained response are examples of this. For instance, in 2019 an American surveillance drone was shot down by Iran over the Strait of Hormuz using an Iranian surface-to-air missile. The Iranians called it an act of self-defence as the drone, they said, was within their airspace, while the U.S.

claimed it was flying over international waters. Tensions were already high then, and U.S. President Trump ordered a strike, but it was soon aborted. Although U.S. forces maintained readiness in the region, no overt military retaliation occurred. Similarly, when Russia brought down an American MQ-9 Reaper UAV in 2023 there was no major retaliation.

While this perceived lower level of threat can prevent actions from resulting in conventional warfare, it can also indirectly encourage risk-taking behaviours. While countries would not typically be willing to infiltrate another country's airspace or fly close to foreign territories in a fighter jet, the costs of losing an unmanned aircraft are lower and therefore countries are more willing to utilise them for such missions. Given that UAVs are also met with less drastic forms of retaliation, countries can see them as an easy way to perform actions

that they would not otherwise.

What are the repercussions for India?

The challenge for India is to figure out how to effectively deal with UAVs, especially in relation to its neighbouring countries. In the case of Pakistan, smaller propeller-powered UAVs are often used to transport arms and drugs across the border, with the Pakistani government not taking accountability. India will need to figure out how to deal with such incursions without utilising expensive missiles to bring them down like it did in 2019. Air-to-air missiles like the one India used via a Su-30 in 2019 are far more expensive than the dual-use UAVs they are used to bring down. Pakistan has not taken any major retaliatory actions when India has shot down UAVs. Similarly, Bangladesh recently deployed Turkish Bayraktar TB-2 UAVs near the Indian border for surveillance. In the case of larger fixed-wing UAVs like the Bayraktar TB-2, which is akin to most inhabited military aircraft in terms of size and endurance, in the unlikely event that it ventures into Indian airspace, given the lower associated level of threat, India will have to figure out how to address the issue without risking further escalation.

As UAVs become integrated with military operations, Indian military strategy will have to evolve accordingly.

Adya Madhavan is a researcher at the Takshashila Institution.

THE GIST

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The background of the slide features a dark grey grid pattern. Three white, V-shaped UAVs are shown in flight, moving from left to right across the center of the frame. Each UAV has a yellow sensor pod mounted on its nose. Yellow lines represent their flight paths, which are curved and looping. The overall aesthetic is technical and futuristic.

Introduction

- **UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles)** are increasingly used for military operations, surveillance, and reconnaissance.
- Their **threat perception is lower** compared to **manned fighter jets**.
- The article explores why UAVs are considered less of a threat, their implications, and challenges for India.



Why Are UAVs Seen as Less of a Threat?

A. Lower Danger Perception

- UAVs, even when carrying **weapon payloads**, are **less capable than fighter jets**.
- **Most UAVs are unarmed** and primarily serve **surveillance and reconnaissance** purposes.

. No Direct Human Presence

- Countries hesitate to shoot down **manned aircraft** due to the **risk of casualties** and escalation.
- UAVs, being unmanned, **reduce political and military risks**.

C. Financial Considerations

- **Losing a UAV is less costly** than losing a piloted fighter jet.
- Even if UAVs are **shot down by enemy forces**, the financial burden is **comparatively lower**.

Recent Examples of UAV Usage

A. Limited Retaliation in Drone Shootdowns

- **2019 Incident:** Iran shot down a **U.S. surveillance drone** in the Strait of Hormuz.
 - Iran claimed it was an act of **self-defense**.
 - **U.S.** did not respond militarily.
- **2023 Incident:** Russia **brought down a U.S. MQ-9 Reaper UAV**.
 - No **major retaliation** followed.
- These examples show that **shooting down UAVs does not escalate into full-scale conflicts**.

Repercussions for India

A. UAV Threats from Neighboring Countries

- **Pakistan's UAVs** are often used for **arms and drug smuggling** across the border.
- **Bangladesh has deployed Turkish Bayraktar TB-2 UAVs** near the Indian border for surveillance.
- **India needs a strategy** to counter UAV incursions without escalating tensions.

B. Cost of Engagement

- **Air-to-air missiles (e.g., Su-30) used to shoot down UAVs are more expensive than the UAVs themselves.**
- **Pakistan has not retaliated militarily** when India shot down UAVs.

C. India's Strategy Challenge

- With UAVs becoming **common in military operations**, India must:
 - **Develop counter-UAV strategies.**
 - **Avoid overusing expensive air-to-air missiles** to shoot down UAVs.
 - **Consider electronic warfare and interception techniques.**

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH table with columns: Index, % Change, Value

NIFTY 50

NIFTY 50 table listing various stocks and their prices and changes

EXCHANGE RATES

EXCHANGE RATES table listing rates for various currencies

'Commodity price volatility poses risk to inflation'

As tariff wars rage, passing on higher prices to consumers is a key risk to inflation; India's external sector is being supported by resilient services exports, says the central bank in its March bulletin

The Hindu Bureau MUMBAI

Though headline inflation moderated significantly from above 5% in October 2024 to 3.6% in February 2025, high frequency food price data up to March 17 show a rise in prices of rice and wheat, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) officials said.

Edible oil prices rise Edible oil prices have firmed up as well - mainly driven by palm, soybean and sunflower oil, they said in the State of the Eco-



Food for thought: Edible oil prices have firmed up as well - mainly driven by palm, soybean and sunflower oil, RCBTCS

nommy article published in the RBI's monthly Bulletin. Pulses prices, on the other hand, continued to show broad-based modera-

tion. Prices of key vegetables including potato, onion and tomato saw further correction. While facing challenges from weakening global trade and tariff uncertainty, India's external sector continued to find support from resilient services exports, which have been less affected by global disruptions, the officials said. Robust kharif production, better rains sowing coupled with higher reservoir levels and seasonal winter correction in vegetable prices augur well for food inflation, although volatility in commodity prices and weather anomalies remain potential upside risks to the overall inflation outlook, they concluded.

'Eutelsat OneWeb is enterprise focused'

Aaron DeBor NEW DELHI

A Eutelsat OneWeb executive said on Wednesday that the company's service offering is primarily oriented to enterprise customers, unlike SpaceX's Starlink, which she termed as a conventional home broadband substitute.

"OneWeb provides enterprise-led connectivity with security layers built in it and defence becomes an important use case," Nishtha Kapoor, regional director for India, SAARC countries and Africa said at a

Steel from Vietnam, China faces 12% duty

Abhishek Law NEW DELHI

The Directorate-General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has recommended a provisional safeguard duty of 12% on a majority of steel imports, including metal shipments from China and Vietnam. The move has been triggered by the need to eliminate the serious injury and threat to the domestic industry and signals a relief for the country's steel mills.

The levy is recommended for a 200-day period, pending the final determination of the probe. Imports from developing nations excluding China and Vietnam will be exempt. A final call on the quantum of duty has to be notified by the Finance Ministry.



The writer is with The Hindu Businessline

'U.S., U.K. replace Gulf nations as top source of remittances'

Ashokamithran T. MUMBAI

Developed economies emerged as the top source of inward remittances for Indians in the last four years, RBI officials said in a paper titled "Changing Dynamics of India's Remittances - Insights from the Sixth Round of India's Remittances Survey", in the March Bulletin published by the central bank.

Remittances from the U.S. and the U.K. together nearly doubled to 40% of the total money coming into India through banks in the last fiscal year (FY24). This number was 26% in FY17. Just about 3% of the transfers came to India from the U.K. in FY17. This zoomed to 10.8% in FY24.

U.S. became the top source in FY24, bringing in 23.4% of inward remittance. This increased to nearly 28% in FY24.

The authors of the article cited the rise in the share of Indian labour in the U.S. and the U.K. as the reason behind higher remittances from these two countries.

Rise in Indian labour While money from Indians in countries that were so far significant contributors, has either stayed stagnant or decreased, United Arab Emirates (UAE) share reduced to 19.2% in the FY24 from 27% in FY17.

Remittances from Saudi Arabia almost halved to 7.9% in FY24 from 11.6% in FY17.

IN BRIEF



Vodafone Idea shares jump 5% after 5G services roll-out

Shares of Vodafone Idea on Wednesday ended 8% higher after the firm introduced 5G services in India, starting from Mumbai with five more cities up next. The stock rose 4.95% to settle at ₹7.45 apiece on the BSE. On the NSE, it rallied 5.07% to ₹7.46. Vodafone Idea unveiled its 5G services in India as the telco bets on the new offering to arrest subscriber churn and place it on a firm footing against larger rivals in the world's second-largest telecom market.

Hyundai to increase prices by up to 3% from April on costs

Hyundai Motor India Ltd. (HMIL) has announced an increase in vehicle prices by up to 3% effective April. This follows rising input cost, increasing commodity prices and operational expenditure, among other reasons, the company said. "With the sustained increase in operational expenses, it has now become imperative to pass on a part of this cost escalation through a minor price adjustment," said Tarun Garg, whole time director and COO, HMIL.

On April 2, U.S. to present tariff number for countries

Washington is expected to present U.S. trading partners on April 2 with a number representing their tariff and other barriers, as it unveils reciprocal levels tailored to each country, a U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Tuesday. President Donald Trump promises reciprocity on allies and competitors from April 2. "We are going to say, look, here's where we think tariff levels are, non-tariff barriers, currency manipulation, labour suppression," he added.

IndiGo to get A321 XLRs from FY2026

Jagriti Chandra NEW DELHI

Following a delay, IndiGo will receive its A321 XLRs in the financial year 2026, according to IndiGo CEO Preet Elbers.

The exact number of the planes to be delivered is still under discussion with Airbus, he told The Hindu. The airline has 69 A321 XLRs on order, a part of 340 A320 neo family aircraft ordered in 2019. The XLRs provide extended range capabilities, making them the longest-range single-aisle aircraft.

They were previously expected to join IndiGo's fleet in financial year 2025 but the aircraft's entry into service was de-

layed due to certification issues faced by Airbus. The airline is marking its foray into non-stop flights to Europe from July with services to Manchester and Amsterdam. The airline will use Boeing 787-9s wet leased from Norse Atlantic until its own wide-body Airbus A350s, ordered last May, start to join the fleet from mid-2027.

Mr. Elbers mentioned Airbus A320neo family aircraft as a set of possible destinations that XLR can help the airline connect, along with other destinations like Denpasar in Indonesia, which is connected with Bengaluru but not with Delhi because of range restrictions of the A320neo, the airline uses.

A class apart



Picture perfect: View taken inside a Lufthansa Airbus A350 airplane shows a flight attendant posing in the plane's Lufthansa Allegria First Class area during a press conference to present the new first class, at the airport in Munich, southern Germany. AFP

'Doubling India-UAE airline capacity can save \$1.05 bn'

Jagriti Chandra NEW DELHI

Doubling airline capacity via liberalised air service agreement between India and the UAE will result in savings for Indian consumers exceeding \$1.05 billion who are currently paying steep airfares, according to a joint report by the UAE Embassy and the OIC released on Wednesday.

Doubling of capacity over five years could yield an economic benefit exceeding \$1.05 billion to Indian consumers, as per the report. Even a phased 5% annual rise in bilateral seat capacity leading to a cumulative 20% increase is likely to add over \$152 million in consumer surplus by 2028, it comes with a strategic, phased approach to open up the skies, and do so



Mutual benefits: The report also suggested collaboration to strengthen aviation hubs in both countries.

with urgency. This will ensure both countries stay ahead of demand, capitalise on mutual opportunities, and jointly secure their position as global aviation leaders," the report states. The demands have been vehemently opposed by Air India, whose CEO Campbell Wilson warned

in 2023 that India must not open the "floodgates to foreign carriers" that divert traffic to their hubs as it was not in the "national interest" because the erstwhile national carrier was making losses.

The bilateral air service pact with the OIC region UAE and India in 2014. In a recent media interview, UAE Ambassador Jamal Abhaqi said that they have proposed a 4:1 seat ratio to the Indian government, of 66,000 seats per week to Indian destinations, and India's airlines have also secured their limit.

These demands have been vehemently opposed by Air India, whose CEO Campbell Wilson warned mechanisms that are reviewed annually based on passenger demand rather than fixed quotas. Open skies Further, in order to permit greater access for UAE airlines to India's tier-2 and tier-3 cities such as Jaipur, Lucknow, Coimbatore, Vishakhapatnam, Patna, Bhubaneswar and Amritsar, the report urges for an open skies with UAE similar to ASEAN countries. The report also suggested collaboration to strengthen aviation hubs in both countries and "develop complementary strategies rather than competing for transit traffic."

Wipro joins hands with NVIDIA on sovereign AI services

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

Wipro Limited has announced new agentic AI services to empower nations around the globe to develop and deploy artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities leveraging its infrastructure, data, workforce and business networks to drive innovation, economic growth and sovereignty.

"There's rising demand for ethical AI practices and transparency in AI decision-making. By working together with NVIDIA, we will be able to quickly deploy AI agent systems and technologies while ad-

ressing the increased concerns many government agencies and organisations have over data privacy, security, and national sovereignty," said Nagendra Bandaru, president and managing partner, Wipro Technology Services.

According to a communication, Wipro's WeGA Sovereign AI solutions will be built on NVIDIA NeMo microservices and a wide range of applications will be supported via an agentic AI powered ecosystem that can transform citizen experiences in banking and financial and emergency services besides healthcare and education.

'U.S., U.K. replace Gulf nations as top source of remittances'

Ashokamithran T.

MUMBAI

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Rise in Indian labour

While money from Indians in countries that were so far significant contributors, has either stayed stagnant or decreased. United Arab Emirates (UAE) share reduced to 19.2% in the FY24 from 27% in FY17.

Remittances from Saudi Arabia almost halved to 6.7% in FY24 from 11.6% in FY17.

Key Findings from RBI Report

- The **United States (U.S.) and the United Kingdom (U.K.)** have **overtaken Gulf nations** as the primary sources of remittances to India.
- Data from the **RBI's Sixth Round of India's Remittances Survey** in the March Bulletin highlights this trend.
- **Nearly 40%** of India's total **inward remittances** in **FY24** came from the U.S. and the U.K., **almost double** their share in **FY17 (26%)**.
- **U.K.'s share** in remittances to India surged from **3% in FY17 to 10.8% in FY24**.
- **U.S. is now the top source** of remittances, contributing **nearly 28% in FY24**, up from **23.4% in FY21**.

Factors Behind the Shift

Increased presence of Indian labor force in the U.S. and U.K. is driving this change.

More Indians are securing **higher-paying jobs** in these developed economies.

. Decline in Gulf Contributions

- **United Arab Emirates (UAE) share fell to 19.2% in FY24, down from 27% in FY17.**
- **Saudi Arabia's remittance share has nearly halved, dropping from 11.6% in FY17 to 6.7% in FY24.**
- **This suggests a possible decline in job opportunities or stagnation in wages for Indian workers in Gulf nations.**



Economic and Social Impacts

A. Positive Impacts

- **Higher remittances from developed nations** boost India's foreign exchange reserves.
- **Better wages and job stability** for Indian migrants in the U.S. and U.K.
- Shift in remittances could **enhance financial security** for Indian families.

B. Challenges

- **Declining remittances from Gulf nations** may indicate **shrinking opportunities** for Indian workers there.
- Potential **job market adjustments** needed for Indian workers in traditional Gulf destinations.

Govt clears ₹1,500-crore UPI incentive, urea plant in Assam, gives dairy boost

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MARCH 19

IN A host of decision, the Union Cabinet Wednesday cleared a ₹1,500-crore incentive for promotion of small-value BHIM-UPI (P2M) transactions up to ₹2,000, setting up of a urea plant in Assam, and revised two schemes to boost milk production, procurement level and processing capacity.

The Cabinet also approved the construction of a six-lane access-controlled greenfield high-speed NH to connect JNPA Port (Pagote) with Chowk (29.219 km) in Maharashtra at an investment of ₹4,500 crore. According to a statement, the project will be developed on a build, operate and transfer (BOT) mode, it said.

Regarding the 'Incentive Scheme for promotion of low-value BHIM-UPI transactions Person to Merchant (P2M)' for FY



Union I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

2024-25, PM Narendra Modi said on X, "The incentive scheme on promoting low-value UPI transactions, which has been approved by the Cabinet today will encourage digital payments and further 'Ease of Living'."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on X, "The benefits under this scheme will add new fuel to online transactions and help our digital economy to race

ahead at an even faster pace..."

The scheme will cover 55 per cent of total merchant transactions, an official release said. An incentive at 0.15 per cent will be provided for transaction up to ₹2,000 for the category of small merchants. For all quarters of the scheme, 80 per cent of the admitted claim amount by the acquiring banks will be disbursed without any conditions while the rest 20 per cent will be contingent upon meeting certain conditions.

"As small merchants are price-sensitive, incentives would encourage them to accept UPI payment," the release said.

The Cabinet also gave its nod to set up a new brownfield Ammonia-Urea Complex of 12.7 lakh tonnes annual capacity of urea production within the existing premises of Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Ltd (BVFCL), Namrup Assam at an estimated cost of ₹10,601.4 crore

to reduce the import of the crop nutrient and make India self-sufficient, Union I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. The plant will be established with a debt-equity ratio of 70:30 through a Joint Venture.

The government revised two schemes — National Program for Dairy Development (NPDD) and Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), raising the outlay by ₹2,000 crore to ₹6,190 crore to boost milk production, procurement level and processing capacity. "The revised NPDD, a Central Sector Scheme, has been enhanced with an additional ₹1,000 crore, bringing the total budget to ₹2,790 crore for the period of the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26)," a statement said.

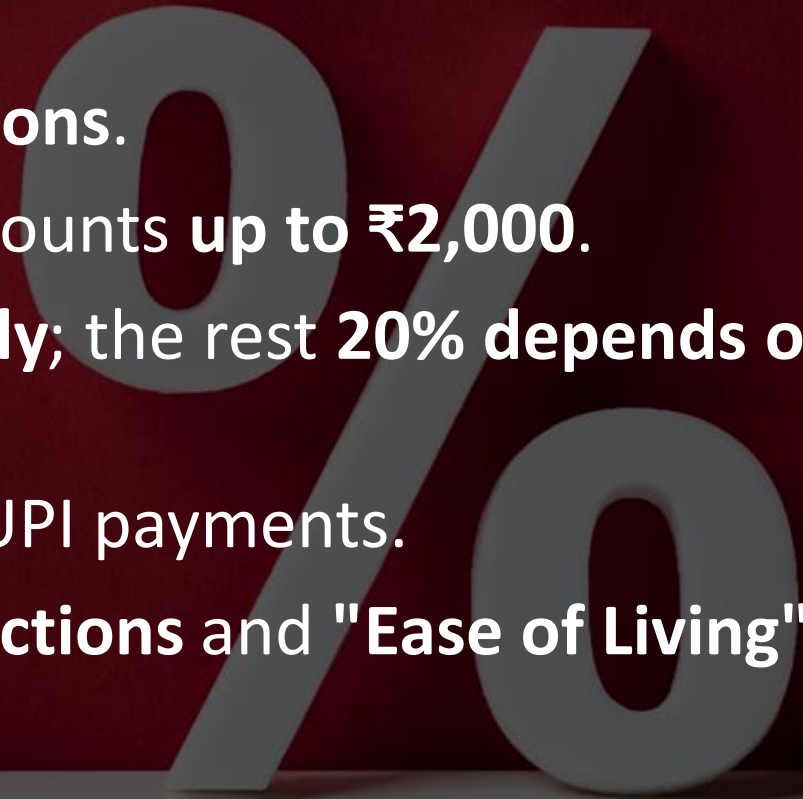
This initiative focuses on modernising and expanding dairy infrastructure, ensuring the sector's sustained growth and productivity, Vaishnaw said.

Key Cabinet Decisions

- **₹1,500 Crore Incentive for UPI:** To promote small-value **BHIM-UPI (Person-to-Merchant, P2M)** transactions up to ₹2,000.
- **Urea Plant in Assam:** Approval for a **12.7 lakh tonne ammonia-urea complex** in Namrup, Assam, costing ₹10,601.4 crore.
- **Dairy Sector Boost:** Two schemes (NPDD & RGM) revised, increasing the outlay by ₹2,000 crore to ₹6,190 crore.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Approval for a ₹4,500 crore **six-lane high-speed NH** to connect **JNPA Port (Pagote)** and **Chowk (Maharashtra)**.

UPI Incentive Scheme

- Covers **55% of total merchant transactions**.
- **0.15% incentive per transaction** for amounts up to **₹2,000**.
- **80% of claims disbursed unconditionally**; the rest **20%** depends on meeting criteria.
- Encourages **small merchants** to adopt UPI payments.
- Supports India's push for digital transactions and "Ease of Living" initiatives.





Urea Plant in Assam

- Ammonia-Urea Complex to be set up at **Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Ltd (BVFCL)**, Namrup.
- Aims to reduce India's dependency on urea imports and achieve self-sufficiency.
- Established through a **70:30 debt-equity joint venture**.



Dairy Sector Reforms

- **Revised National Program for Dairy Development (NPDD):**
 - Additional ₹1,000 crore allocated.
 - Total budget now ₹2,790 crore for 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- **Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM):**
 - Aims to boost milk production, processing, and procurement.
- **Modernizing dairy infrastructure to ensure growth and productivity.**

Economic & Social Impacts

A. Positive Impacts

- Encourages digital payments, benefiting small businesses.
- Boosts domestic urea production, reducing import dependence.
- Enhances dairy industry competitiveness and rural economy.
- Develops critical transport infrastructure in Maharashtra.

B. Challenges

- Efficient implementation of UPI incentives remains a concern.
- Timely execution of the urea plant is crucial to meet self-sufficiency targets.
- Dairy sector sustainability depends on proper policy execution.

BYD's promise of a 5-min charge puts it firmly ahead in the EV race, widens gap with Tesla

ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, MARCH 19

ACHIEVING ELECTRIC vehicle charging speeds comparable to refueling petrol or diesel vehicles has been the elusive next frontier, often cited as the "holy grail" of the EV technological evolution. Shenzhen-based BYD Co. promises to change that, having just unveiled a new battery-charging system for electric cars that the Chinese automaker says will allow some of its cars to charge almost as fast as it takes a regular car to refuel at a fuel pump.

BYD's new battery and charging system, which it calls the Super e-Platform, could provide 470 kilometers of range in 5 minutes in tests on its new Han L sedan, the company's chairman and founder Wang Chuanfu said Monday. The manufacturer will start selling vehicles with the new technology from April.

BYD's Super e-Platform

While BYD did not give more details about its new EV platform, its founder Wang said in an event at the carmaker's headquarters in Shenzhen that the first models to get the ultra-fast charging will be the Han L and the Tang L sport utility vehicle. The new tech will allow these cars to reach a speed of 100 kilometers per hour in 2 seconds, Wang said. All this means BYD is clearly ahead in the EV leadership game, and is increasing the gap between itself and competitors, especially Tesla, Inc. The promise of the 470 km range with a 5 minute charge places it comfortably ahead of Tesla's Superchargers, which can add up to 275 kilometers of range in 15 minutes.

Other too are making progress, with Mercedes-Benz Group's new entry-level CLA electric sedan unveiled last week featuring an 85 kWh battery pack that delivers almost 800 km of claimed range, and with the German carmaker claiming that with its new 800-volt electric architecture, the CLA takes just 10 minutes to recharge and provide a range of 325 km. BYD's Chinese



A BYD Sealion 7 EV car at the Thailand International Motor Expo in Bangkok.

Reuters File



competitor Li Auto, too claims that it can achieve 500 kilometer of range in 12 minutes with its latest battery sourced from

Contemporary Amperex Technology Ltd. or CATL, the world's biggest battery maker and the main competitor to BYD's battery business.

EV leader

The new battery-charging platform could provide yet another boost for BYD, which has come from behind to outgun Tesla as the world's top EV seller. The platform requires new charging infrastructure that the Chinese company has said it will progressively set up, with plans to build more than 4,000 charging stations in China and elsewhere, designed to accommodate the new technology superchargers. Tesla, though, has a much larger network of more than 60,000 Superchargers worldwide.

The new EV powertrain could further boost demand for BYD's next-generation cars, which have already outperformed vehicles from Tesla and other competitors. BYD also is more hedged in terms of auto technology, since it makes not just battery electric vehicles, but also a range of hybrids, which companies such as Tesla do not.

The other thing is pricing, where BYD has an edge. Its first set of models to get the new ultra-fast charging start at aggressive prices of under \$38,000 (in China), comparable to Tesla's Model 3's starting price tag of around \$36,000

(in China and other western markets). Even as Tesla's stock has been tanking, BYD reported sales of over 3,18,000 passenger vehicles in February, up over 150 per cent from a year earlier and the Chinese company's Hong Kong-listed shares, which are already up nearly 50 per cent this year, surged on Tuesday.

BYD's Super e-Platform could also pose a competitive threat to its biggest competitor in the battery manufacturing space — CATL, currently the world's largest manufacturer of EV batteries. BYD, though, is far more integrated in its approach, starting from manufacturing its own batteries all the way up to making EVs.

Solid state batteries — the next frontier

Meanwhile, Japan's Toyota Motor Corp, the world's largest carmaker and a late entrant into the battery electric vehicle race, is aiming to roll out next-generation solid-state batteries over the next three years. The solid state battery technology promises to double vehicle range and drastically lower charging time. In the due course, the Japanese carmaker could potentially have two sets of battery electric vehicles or BEV on offer across markets, including India — one range with existing Lithium-ion batteries and a second range with its new and pricier solid state batteries, a senior company executive at Toyota's joint venture in India had indicated to *The Indian Express*.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

- **BYD's new charging system, the Super e-Platform, can charge 470 km range in just 5 minutes.**
- **Tesla's Supercharger takes 15 minutes for 275 km range, giving BYD a clear lead.**
- **The new technology will be rolled out in April 2024 with the Han L sedan and Han Land Plus sports utility vehicle.**
- **Competing brands like Li Auto claim 500 km range in 12 minutes, using CATL's batteries.**



BYD's Super e-Platform

- **Allows ultra-fast charging, nearly matching petrol refueling time.**
- **Han Land Plus SUV can reach 100 km/hr in 2 seconds.**
- **Outpaces Mercedes-Benz CLA (325 km in 10 minutes) and Tesla's Supercharger speeds.**
- **BYD is the leading EV seller globally, surpassing Tesla in sales.**

A nighttime photograph of a city skyline with a prominent multi-level highway interchange in the foreground. The buildings are illuminated with various lights, and the highway has a steady flow of traffic. The overall scene is dark, with the city lights providing the primary illumination.

Market & Competitive Advantage

- **BYD leads in EV infrastructure with 4,000 new superchargers in China.**
- **Tesla has a larger network of 60,000 Superchargers worldwide.**
- **BYD's Hong Kong-listed shares have surged by 50% in the past year.**



Pricing & Affordability

- **BYD's new models to get ultra-fast charging are priced at \$38,000, comparable to Tesla Model 3's \$36,000 starting price.**
- **BYD's diversified product range includes hybrids, unlike Tesla's all-electric portfolio.**



Solid-State Batteries: The Next Frontier

- **Toyota plans next-gen solid-state batteries within 3 years, promising:**
 - Double vehicle range
 - Faster charging times
 - Two battery options:
 - Standard Lithium-ion
 - Premium solid-state technology
- **Could disrupt the EV market, including in India.**

Economic & Industrial Impact

A. Economic Impact

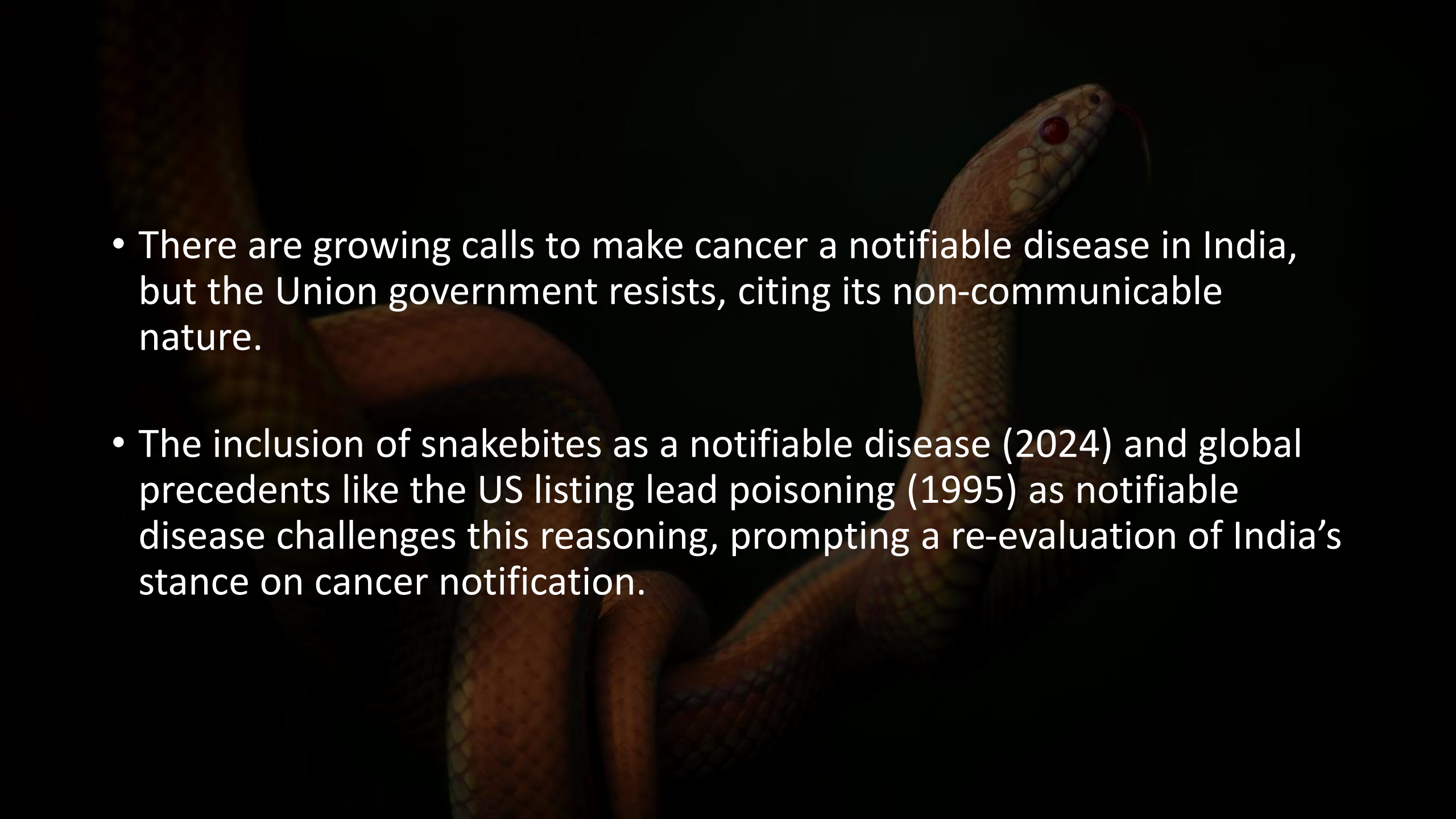
- **Boosts China's EV leadership**, expanding its global market share.
- **Puts pressure on Tesla & traditional automakers** to match innovation.
- **BYD's growing production & battery supply chain challenges CATL's dominance.**

B. Industrial & Technological Impact

- **BYD's battery-first approach** positions it as a leader in **battery innovation & manufacturing.**
- **Toyota's solid-state battery** could be a **game changer** if commercialized early.

Debate on Making Cancer a Notifiable Disease


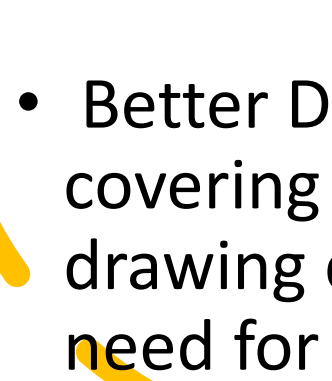


- 
- There are growing calls to make cancer a notifiable disease in India, but the Union government resists, citing its non-communicable nature.
 - The inclusion of snakebites as a notifiable disease (2024) and global precedents like the US listing lead poisoning (1995) as notifiable disease challenges this reasoning, prompting a re-evaluation of India's stance on cancer notification.

What is Notifiable Disease in India?

- **About:** A **notifiable disease** is one that must be legally reported to government authorities by **healthcare providers** for real-time epidemiological tracking, resource allocation, and early intervention.
 - The **Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897** governs the notification and regulation of **epidemic disease** (rapid spread of disease to a large number) reporting.

-
- The World Health Organization (WHO) mandates notification for certain diseases to aid in global disease surveillance and control.
 - **Examples:** Infectious diseases like **tuberculosis, malaria, and Covid-19 are typically notifiable** due to their potential to spread.
 - However, the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)** classified snakebite as a notifiable disease, despite it being non-communicable.

- 
- What is the Debate on Classifying Cancer as a Notifiable Disease?
 - Arguments in Favor
 - Better Data Collection: The National Cancer Registry Program (NCRP), covering only 16% of India's population, lacks comprehensive data, drawing criticism from a parliamentary committee, highlighting the need for improved tracking.
- 

With enhanced data nearly **50% of cancer deaths** are preventable by controlling risk factors like **smoking, air pollution, and asbestos exposure**.

Some cancers, like **cervical cancer**, are linked to **human papillomavirus** (spreads through contact), prompting experts to propose classifying cancer as a “**documentable disease**” for mandatory data collection.

Indian States Approach: 17 states have made cancer notifiable through administrative orders, highlighting the need for a **national-level mandate**.

- States with **high cancer incidence, like Kerala and Mizoram**, could benefit from mandatory notification for better intervention.

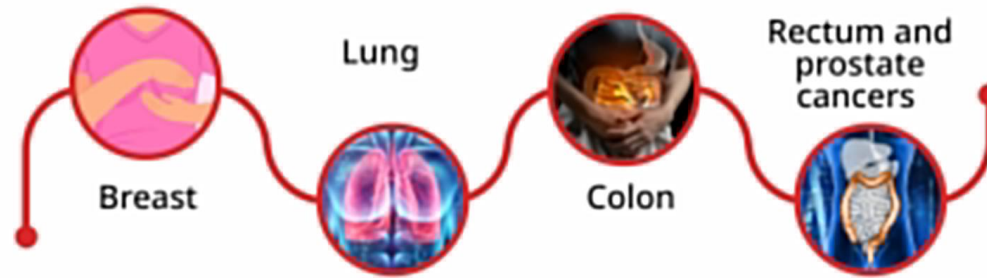
Global Precedents: Countries like **Australia** have made cancer notifiable, while the **United Kingdom** mandates cancer registration, in contrast, India's NCRP registration remains voluntary.

WORLD CANCER DAY 4th February



Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide, accounting for nearly 10 million deaths in 2020, or nearly 1 in 6 deaths.

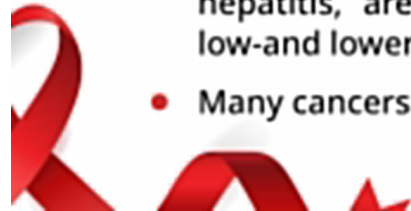
Most Common Cancers



Around 1/3rd of deaths from cancer are due to-



- Cancer-causing infections, such as human papillomavirus (HPV) and hepatitis, are responsible for approximately 30% of cancer cases in low-and lower-middle-income countries.
- Many cancers can be cured if detected early and treated effectively.



With reference to the treatment of cancerous tumours, a tool called cyberknife has been making the news. In this context, which one of the following statements is not correct? (2010)

- (a) It is a robotic image guided system
- (b) It delivers an extremely precise dose of radiation
- (c) It has the capability of achieving sub-millimetre accuracy
- (d) It can map the spread of tumour in the body

**'RNA interference (RNAi)' technology has gained popularity in the last few years.
Why? (2019)**

1. It is used in developing gene-silencing therapies.
2. It can be used in developing therapies for the treatment of cancer.
3. It can be used to develop hormone replacement therapies.
4. It can be used to produce crop plants that are resistant to viral pathogens.

Mains


Q. “Besides being a moral imperative of a Welfare State, primary health structure is a necessary precondition for sustainable development.” Analyse. (2021)

A dark, monochromatic photograph of a wooden floor with a grid pattern and large numbers painted on it. The text "Pi Day" is overlaid in white outline font.

Pi Day

Pi Day, celebrated annually on 14th March, honors the mathematical constant π (pi). The day also coincides with Albert Einstein's birth anniversary (1879) and the death anniversary of Stephen Hawking (2018).

Significance of Pi: It represents the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter and is an irrational, infinite number.

- 
- The **Greek letter π** was first used in 1706 by **Welsh mathematician William Jones**, inspired by the words “periphery” and “perimeter”.

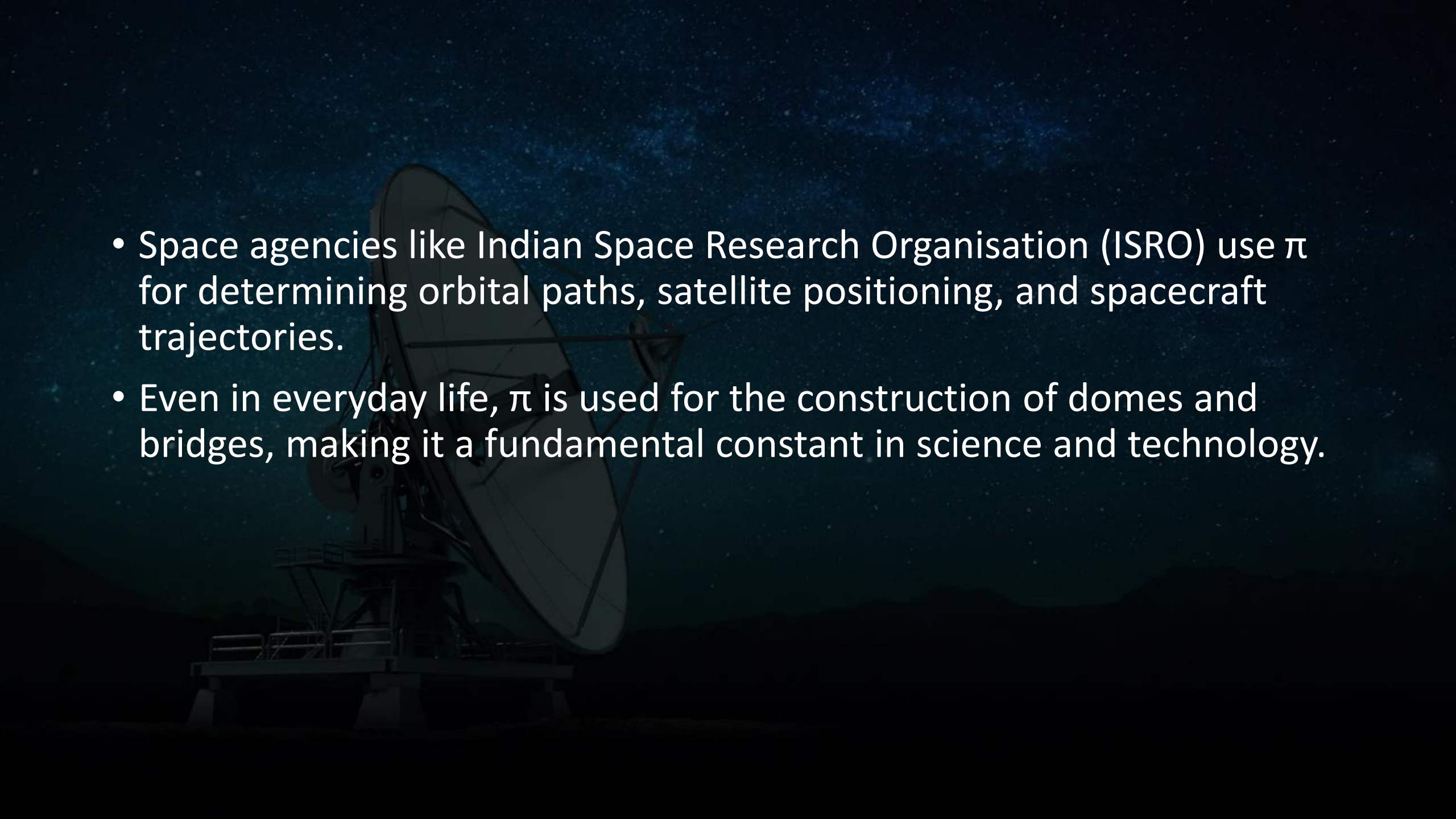


- Indian's Contribution:

- Aryabhata (476-550 CE), an Indian mathematician and astronomer, calculated an approximate value of pi as 3.1416 in his work "Aryabhatiya."

- The first algorithms to calculate pi to millions of digits were based on formulae published by Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan in 1914.

- **Applications of Pi:** In mathematics and engineering, Pi is essential for calculating circle properties, wave equations, and structural designs.

- 
- Space agencies like Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) use π for determining orbital paths, satellite positioning, and spacecraft trajectories.
 - Even in everyday life, π is used for the construction of domes and bridges, making it a fundamental constant in science and technology.

NIDAR Initiative Overview

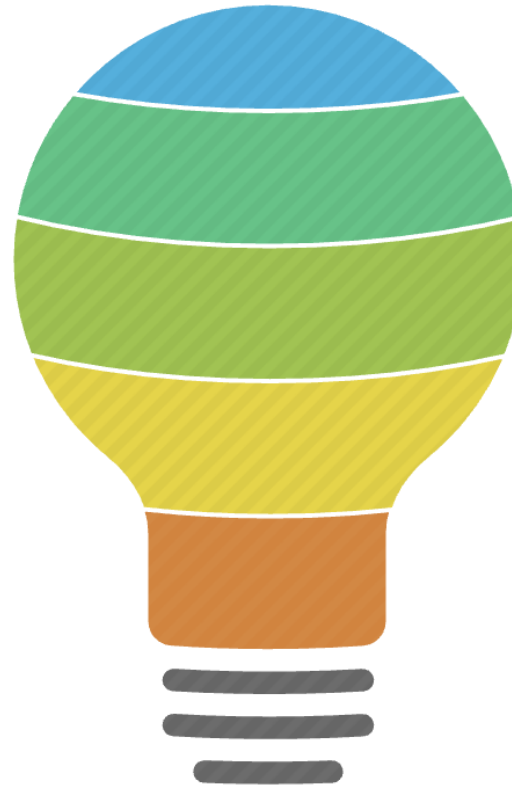
MeitY
Government's role in launching NIDAR



Shri S. Krishnan
Inaugural event and vision for drones



Drone Applications
Focus on disaster management and agriculture



DFI
Industry collaboration for drone research



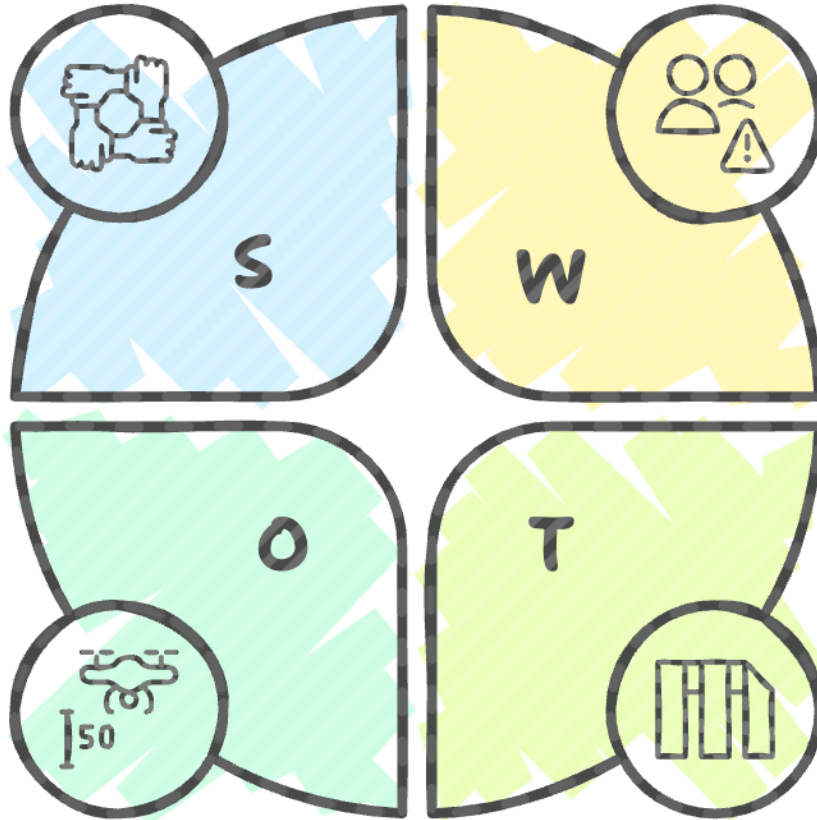
Prof. T. G. Sitharam
Emphasis on academic collaboration



National Innovation Challenge for Drone Application and Research (NIDAR)

Collaborative Engagement

Strong partnerships with industry and academia



Limited Awareness

Need for broader outreach

Expanding Drone Applications

Potential for diverse sector impact

Competitive Landscape

Emerging global drone initiatives

NIDAR Challenge: Enhancing Drone Innovation and Skills

Prizes and Opportunities

INR 40 Lakhs Prize Pool -

Startup Incubation -

Cloud Credits -

Software Support -

Internships -

Support and Mentorship

Drone Federation India -

Industry Leaders -


NIDAR
Challenge



Competition Phases

- Technology Presentation

- Business Case Presentation

- Final Operations



Participating Teams

- Over 100 Teams

- Higher Education Institutions

Prime Minister's Young Authors Mentorship Scheme (YUVA) Scheme

Empowering Young Writers Through YUVA 3.0's Literary Journey



Mentorship

Provides guidance and support to young writers to enhance their skills.

Cultural Documentation

Encourages the recording and sharing of India's diverse cultural heritage.

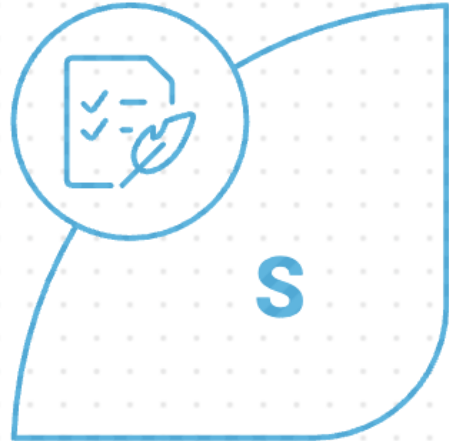
Literary Themes

Focuses on specific themes to inspire and direct creative writing.

YUVA 3.0 Mentorship Scheme

Strong Government Support

Nurtures young literary talent



Limited Age Range

Only for under 30s

Expanding Literary Culture

Encourages diverse voices



Competition from Other Programs

Other initiatives may overshadow

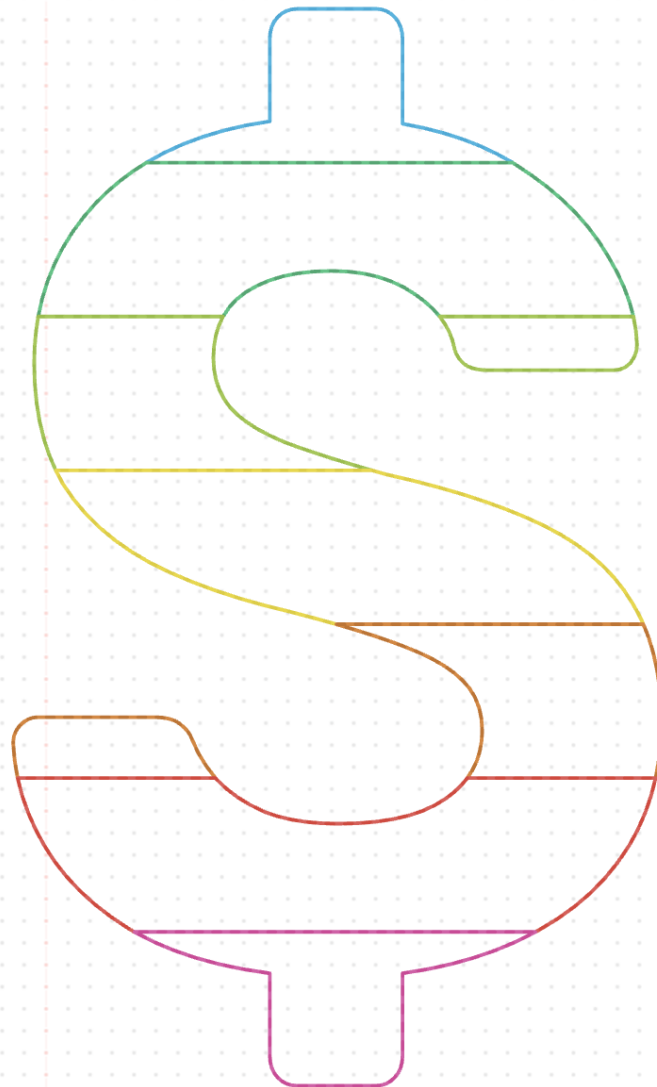
INDIAN AND FRENCH NAVIES SET FOR THE 23rd
EDITION OF BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE - VARUNA
2025



FARM DISTRESS INDEX



Understanding the Farmers' Distress Index



Exposure to Risk

Measures the vulnerability of farmers to various risks.



Adaptive Capacity

Assesses the ability of farmers to adapt to changing conditions.



Sensitivity

Evaluates how sensitive farmers are to distress factors.



Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies

Strategies employed to mitigate and adapt to distress.



Triggers

Identifies events that trigger distress in farming communities.



Psychological Factors

Considers the mental and emotional impacts on farmers.



Impacts

Analyzes the overall impacts of distress on farming.

Explanation of indicators used in FDI

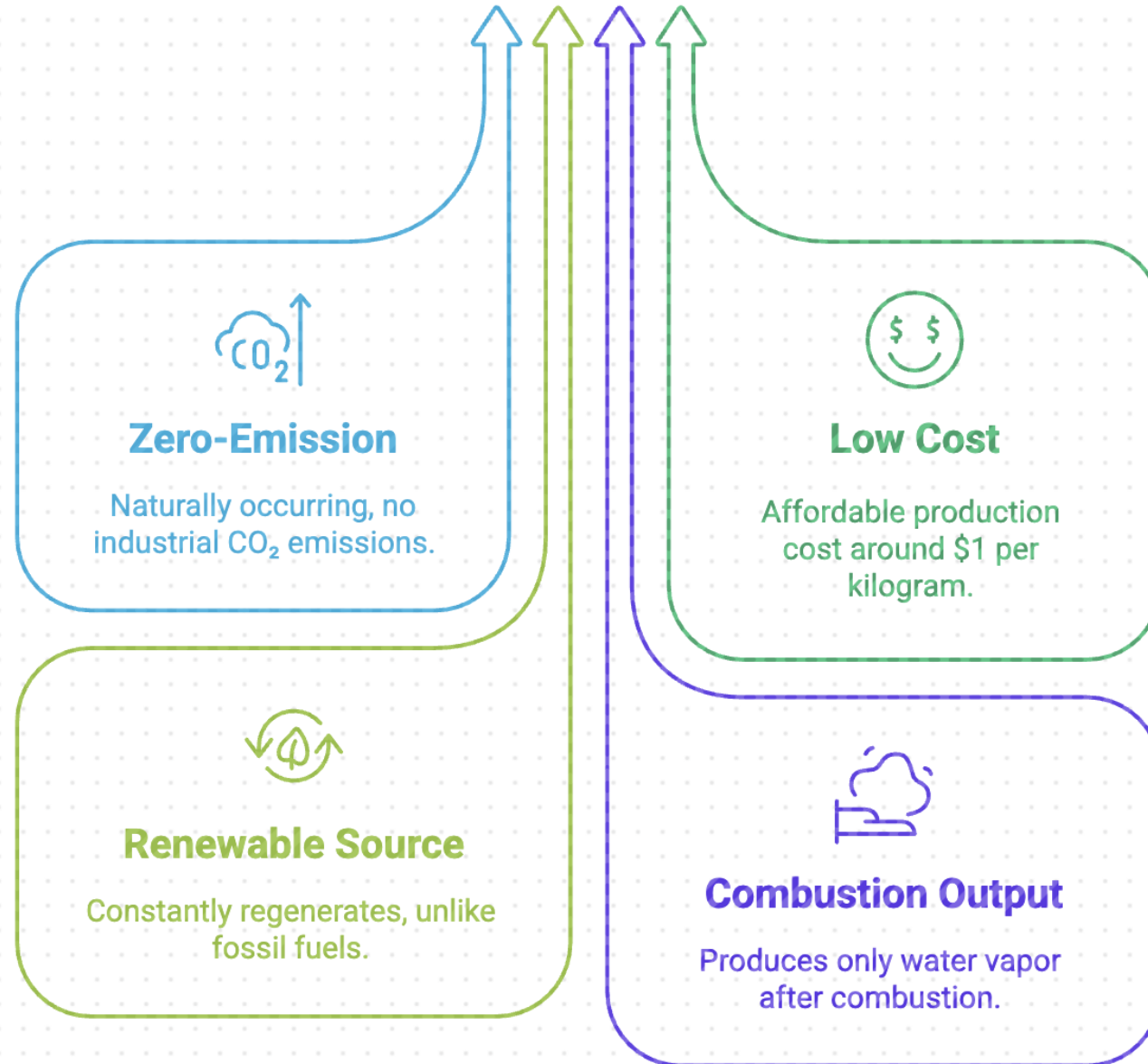
Pillars	Indicator-1	Indicator-2	Indicator-3
Exposure	Loss due to pest/diseases (%)	Loss due to floods/cyclones (%)	Loss due to droughts (%)
Adaptive capacity	Education of the head of household (years)	Total owned land (acre)	Leased-in land (acre)
Sensitivity	Irrigated area (% of total area)	Indebtedness (Rs)	SC/ST community and number of children in household
Adaptation	Non-crop income (as % of total household income)	Number of government schemes household benefited (in current year)	Household savings (Rs.)
Trigger	Informal credit (Rs)	Pressure from repayment of loans (yes/no)	Lack of cash-in-hand to meet immediate farm expenses (yes/no)
Psychological	Feeling of social isolation (yes/no)	Unable to fulfil family obligations (yes/no)	Addicted to alcohol (yes/no)
Impact	Increased indebtedness (Yes/No)	More participation in public works (MGNREGA) (yes/no)	Reduced food consumption (yes/no)



White Hydrogen

-
- France has discovered the world's largest white hydrogen deposit in the Moselle region, estimated at 46 million tons, valued at \$92 trillion. Found beneath the soil of Folschviller in the Moselle region

The Promise of White Hydrogen



White Hydrogen

Pros



Cons



Zero-emission



Limited availability



Low cost



Extraction challenges



Renewable source



Clean combustion

Word of the day

Desiccate:

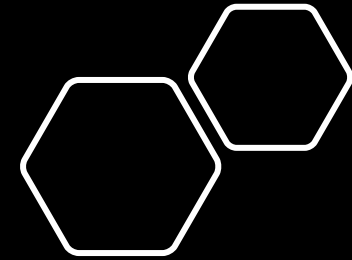
preserve by removing all water and liquids; lose water or moisture; lacking vitality or spirit; lifeless

Synonyms: dehydrate, dry up, exsicate, arid

Usage: *Intensive farming has desiccated the land.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/dessicatepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈdesɪkət/





10 MCQ from the session

What was the duration of the SpaceX Crew Dragon mission before returning to Earth?

स्पेसएक्स क्र ड्रैगन मिशन की कुल अवधि पृथ्वी पर लौटने से पहले कितनी थी?

- **A. 180 days**
- B. 250 days**
- C. 286 days**
- D. 371 days**

Why was the SpaceX Crew Dragon mission prolonged beyond its original schedule?

स्पेसएक्स क्रू ड्रैगन मिशन को मूल कार्यक्रम से अधिक समय तक क्यों जारी रखा गया?

- **A. Crew members volunteered for an extended mission / क्रू सदस्यों ने स्वेच्छा से मिशन को बढ़ाया**
- B. The Boeing Starliner spacecraft failed, leaving astronauts stranded / बोइंग स्टारलाइनर अंतरिक्ष यान विफल हो गया, जिससे अंतरिक्ष यात्री फंस गए**
- C. NASA decided to conduct additional space experiments / नासा ने अतिरिक्त अंतरिक्ष प्रयोग करने का निर्णय लिया**
- D. The International Space Station required urgent repairs / अंतर्राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन को आपातकालीन मरम्मत की आवश्यकता थी**

What is APAAR ID, introduced under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020?

राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति (NEP) 2020 के तहत पेश किया गया APAAR ID क्या है?

- **A. A national-level examination system / एक राष्ट्रीय स्तर की परीक्षा प्रणाली**
- B. A unique student ID for academic record storage / शैक्षणिक रिकॉर्ड भंडारण के लिए एक अद्वितीय छात्र आईडी**
- C. An online learning platform for students / छात्रों के लिए एक ऑनलाइन लर्निंग प्लेटफॉर्म**
- D. A digital certification system for university degrees / विश्वविद्यालय डिग्रियों के लिए एक डिजिटल प्रमाणन प्रणाली**

What is the key concern regarding APAAR ID?

APAAR ID को लेकर मुख्य चिंता क्या है?

- **A. Students may lose access to their academic records / छात्र अपने शैक्षणिक रिकॉर्ड तक पहुंच खो सकते हैं**
- B. It is being implemented without a proper legal framework / इसे उचित कानूनी ढांचे के बिना लागू किया जा रहा है**
- C. It increases the financial burden on schools / यह स्कूलों पर वित्तीय बोझ बढ़ाता है**
- D. It is incompatible with international academic systems / यह अंतरराष्ट्रीय शैक्षणिक प्रणालियों के साथ असंगत है**

Which organization raised concerns about the privacy risks of APAAR ID?

APAAR ID की गोपनीयता जोखिमों को लेकर किस संगठन ने चिंता जताई?

- **A. National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) / राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग (NHRC)**
- B. Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF) / इंटरनेट फ्रीडम फाउंडेशन (IFF)**
- C. NITI Aayog / नीति आयोग**
- D. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) / केंद्रीय अन्वेषण ब्यूरो (CBI)**

What percentage of India's remittances in FY24 came from the U.S. and U.K.?

FY24 में अमेरिका और यूके से भारत में आने वाले प्रेषण का कितना प्रतिशत था?

- **A. 25%**
- B. 30%**
- C. 40%**
- D. 50%**

What trend was observed in remittances from Gulf nations to India?

भारत में खाड़ी देशों से आने वाले प्रेषण में किस प्रवृत्ति को देखा गया?

- **A. Increase in remittance share / प्रेषण हिस्सेदारी में वृद्धि**
- B. Decrease in remittance share / प्रेषण हिस्सेदारी में कमी**
- C. Stable remittance trends / स्थिर प्रेषण प्रवृत्ति**
- D. Fluctuations due to political changes / राजनीतिक परिवर्तनों के कारण उतार-चढ़ाव**

Which country recently discovered the world's largest White Hydrogen deposit?

किस देश ने हाल ही में दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा सफेद हाइड्रोजन भंडार खोजा?

- **A. China / चीन**
- B. France / फ्रांस**
- C. United States / संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका**
- D. Australia / ऑस्ट्रेलिया**

What major decision was taken under the UPI Incentive Scheme?

UPI प्रोत्साहन योजना के तहत कौन सा प्रमुख निर्णय लिया गया?

- **A. Abolishing merchant transaction fees / व्यापारी लेन-देन शुल्क समाप्त करना**
- B. Providing 0.15% incentive for small-value UPI transactions / छोटी राशि के UPI लेन-देन पर 0.15% प्रोत्साहन प्रदान करना**
- C. Mandatory UPI adoption for all government transactions / सभी सरकारी लेन-देन के लिए UPI अपनाना अनिवार्य करना**
- D. Introducing a digital tax on UPI transactions / UPI लेन-देन पर डिजिटल कर लागू करना**

What is the main purpose of the "Farm Distress Index"?

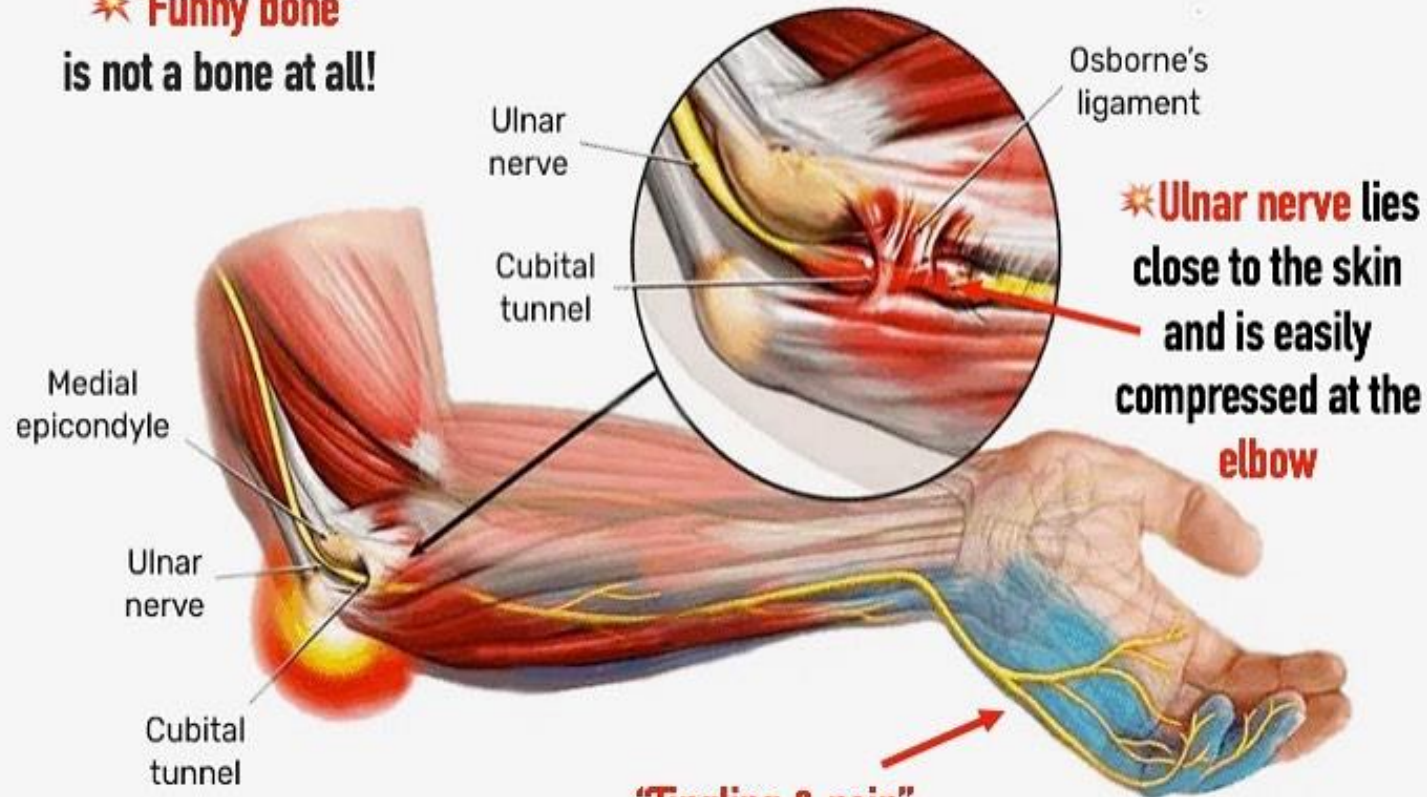
"फार्म डिस्ट्रेस इंडेक्स" का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है?

- **A. Measure crop production levels / फसल उत्पादन स्तर को मापना**
- B. Track financial difficulties faced by farmers / किसानों द्वारा सामना की जा रही वित्तीय कठिनाइयों को ट्रैक करना**
- C. Monitor climate impact on agriculture / कृषि पर जलवायु प्रभाव की निगरानी करना**
- D. Determine land use efficiency / भूमि उपयोग दक्षता का निर्धारण करना**

"FUNNY BONE"

ULNAR NERVE COMPRESSION EXPLAINED

★ "Funny bone"
is not a bone at all!



★ Ulnar nerve lies
close to the skin
and is easily
compressed at the
elbow

"Tingling & pain"
felt down the arm
to the fingers
(4th and 5th digits)

Word of the day

Chicane:

a bridge hand that is void of trumps; a movable barrier used in motor racing; sometimes placed before a dangerous corner to reduce speed as cars pass in single file; the use of tricks to deceive someone (usually to extract money from them); defeat someone through trickery or deceit; raise trivial objections

Synonyms: guile, shenanigan, trickery, wile, cheat

Usage: *That man's car flew out of control and spun across the chicane.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/chicanepro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /ʃi'keɪn/, /tʃi'keɪn/

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A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, some wearing suits. The background is dark and out of focus, showing more people clapping. There are some decorative elements in the top left: a solid orange horizontal bar and a cluster of small, glowing red and blue dots.

Thank you
guys.
