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10 MCQ QUIZ

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

B 25

- 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

उम्र भर खयाली भूतों से अगर मैं ना डरता
खुदा मैं क्या ज़ोर से जीता
खुदा मैं क्या चैन से मरता ।

Trump, 47th President of the U.S., says changes will come fast

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON

Donald J. Trump on Monday took oath for a second term as the United States President, announcing a raft of executive decisions, saying that the “golden age” of America had just begun.

In a fiery inaugural address, the 47th U.S. President described January 20 as the “liberation day” and declared that “America’s decline is over” as changes will come “very quickly”.

“America will reclaim its rightful place as the greatest, most powerful, most respected nation on earth, inspiring the awe and admiration from the entire world,” he said.

Mr. Trump stormed back to the White House for the second term with a strongman persona and a vision of an all-powerful presidency with a promise to aggressively reset U.S. policies in a range of do-

main including immigration, tariffs, and energy.

The new U.S. President listed a series of actions he would roll out immediately including declaring a national emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border, renaming the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America, and said that the U.S. would take back the Panama Canal.

Against immigration

“All illegal entry will immediately be halted, and we will begin the process of returning millions and millions of criminal aliens back to the places from which they came. I will send troops to the southern border,” he said.

“From this day forward, our country will flourish and be respected again all over the world. We will be the envy of every nation, and we will not allow ourselves to be taken advantage of any longer,” Mr. Trump said.



Taking over: Donald Trump delivers his inaugural address as his predecessor Joe Biden looks on in the Capitol on Monday. REUTERS

The Republican leader vowed to put America “first” and that the country would “flourish and be respected” under his leadership as a “peacemaker and a unifier”.

The American dream will soon be back and thriving like never before, he said. “After years and years of illegal and unconstitutional restriction of expression, I will also sign an ex-

ecutive order to stop all censorship and bring back free speech to America,” he said. Mr. Trump also issued a series of executive orders targeting diversity programmes and gender identity policies. Mr. Trump said “as of today, it will henceforth be the official policy of the United States government that there are only two genders, male and female.” “I

will also end the government policy of trying to socially engineer race and gender into every aspect of public and private life,” Mr. Trump said in his inauguration speech, calling the new moves a “revolution of common sense.”

At the Capitol, Vice President J.D. Vance was sworn in first, taking the oath read by Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh on a Bible given to him by his great-grandmother. Mr. Trump followed moments after noon, using both a family Bible and the one used by President Abraham Lincoln at his 1861 inauguration as Chief Justice John Roberts administered his oath.

Breaking tradition, the President delivered his remarks from inside the Capitol Rotunda due to the bitter cold outside. He spoke to several hundred elected officials and pro-Trump VIPs.


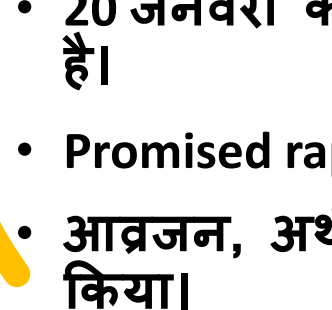
External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended the inauguration ceremony as Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s special envoy. He was carrying a letter from Mr. Modi for Mr. Trump, sources said on Monday.


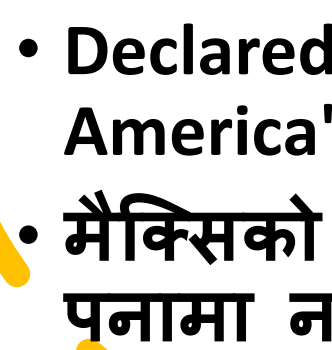
Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni sent “best wishes” to Mr. Trump for the start of his new mandate.

A cadre of billionaires and tech titans – including Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos, Tim Cook, and Sundar Pichai – were given prominent positions in the Capitol Rotunda, mingling with Mr. Trump’s incoming administrative team before the ceremony began. Also present was Elon Musk, the world’s richest man, who is expected to lead an effort to slash spending and federal employees. *(With inputs from AFP and AP)*

MORE REPORTS ON PAGES

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- **Trump's Second Term Begins / ट्रंप का दूसरा कार्यकाल शुरू**
 - **Donald J. Trump took the oath as the 47th U.S. President on January 20, marking the start of his second term.**
 - **डोनाल्ड जे. ट्रंप ने 20 जनवरी को अमेरिका के 47वें राष्ट्रपति के रूप में शपथ ली, जिससे उनका दूसरा कार्यकाल शुरू हुआ।**
 - **Declared January 20 as "Liberation Day," claiming America's "golden age" had begun.**
 - **20 जनवरी को "मुक्ति दिवस" घोषित किया और कहा कि अमेरिका का "स्वर्ण युग" शुरू हो चुका है।**
 - **Promised rapid changes in policies regarding immigration, economy, and national security.**
 - **आव्रजन, अर्थव्यवस्था और राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा से संबंधित नीतियों में तेजी से बदलाव लाने का वादा किया।**
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- **Policy Changes Announced / घोषित नीतिगत बदलाव**
 - **Trump emphasized a strong and aggressive approach to U.S. policies at home and abroad.**
 - **ट्रंप ने घरेलू और विदेशी अमेरिकी नीतियों के प्रति मजबूत और आक्रामक दृष्टिकोण अपनाने पर जोर दिया।**
 - **Declared plans to rename the Gulf of Mexico as the "Gulf of America" and take back the Panama Canal.**
 - **मैक्सिको की खाड़ी का नाम बदलकर "अमेरिका की खाड़ी" रखने और पनामा नहर को वापस लेने की योजना की घोषणा की।**
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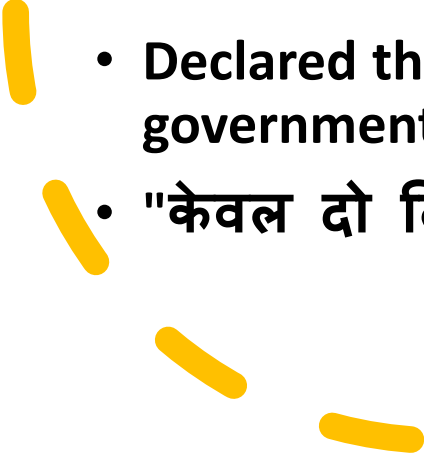
Immigration Reforms / आव्रजन सुधार


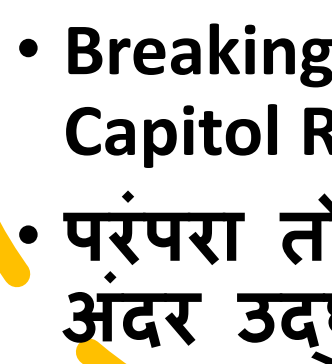
Trump vowed to immediately halt all illegal immigration and deport millions of undocumented immigrants.

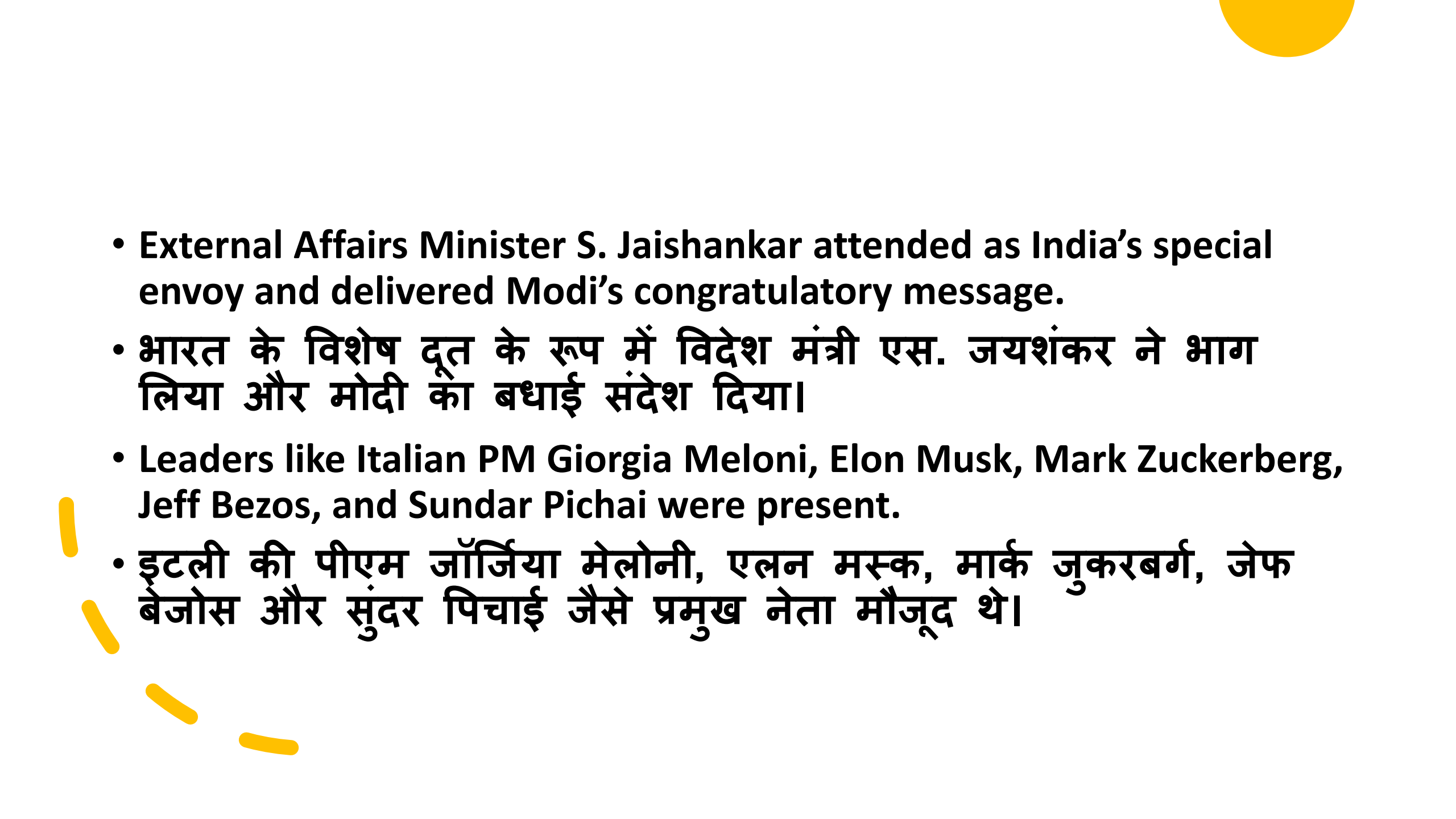
ट्रंप ने अवैध आव्रजन को तुरंत रोकने और लाखों अप्रवासियों को निर्वासित करने का संकल्प लिया।

Promised to send troops to the U.S.-Mexico border to prevent illegal crossings.

अवैध घुसपैठ रोकने के लिए अमेरिकी-मेक्सिको सीमा पर सैनिक तैनात करने का वादा किया।

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- **Social Policies / सामाजिक नीतियां**
 - **Signed an executive order to end all government censorship and restore "free speech."**
 - **"मुक्त अभिव्यक्ति" बहाल करने और सरकारी सेंसरशिप खत्म करने के लिए कार्यकारी आदेश पर हस्ताक्षर किए।**
 - **Announced an end to diversity programs and gender identity policies.**
 - **विविधता कार्यक्रमों और लिंग पहचान नीतियों को समाप्त करने की घोषणा की।**
 - **Declared that "there are only two genders, male and female," making it an official government policy.**
 - **"केवल दो लिंग हैं, पुरुष और महिला," इसे आधिकारिक सरकारी नीति घोषित किया।**
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- Inauguration Ceremony and Global Reactions / शपथ ग्रहण समारोह और वैश्विक प्रतिक्रियाएं
 - Vice President J.D. Vance was sworn in first, followed by Trump.
 - उपराष्ट्रपति जेडी वेंस ने पहले शपथ ली, फिर ट्रंप ने शपथ ग्रहण किया।
 - Breaking tradition, Trump delivered his inaugural speech inside the Capitol Rotunda due to extreme cold.
 - परंपरा तोड़ते हुए, ट्रंप ने अत्यधिक ठंड के कारण कैपिटल रोटुंडा के अंदर उद्घाटन भाषण दिया।
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- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended as India's special envoy and delivered Modi's congratulatory message.
 - भारत के विशेष दूत के रूप में विदेश मंत्री एस. जयशंकर ने भाग लिया और मोदी का बधाई संदेश दिया।
 - Leaders like Italian PM Giorgia Meloni, Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos, and Sundar Pichai were present.
 - इटली की पीएम जॉर्जिया मेलोनी, एलन मस्क, मार्क जुकरबर्ग, जेफ बेजोस और सुंदर पिचाई जैसे प्रमुख नेता मौजूद थे।

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- **Economic and Geopolitical Impact / आर्थिक और भू-राजनीतिक प्रभाव**
 - **Trump's economic agenda focuses on reducing government spending and boosting American manufacturing.**
 - **टंप की आर्थिक नीति का ध्यान सरकारी खर्च में कटौती और अमेरिकी विनिर्माण को बढ़ावा देने पर केंद्रित है।**
 - **His foreign policy is expected to be aggressive, especially regarding China and trade tariffs.**
 - **उनकी विदेश नीति विशेष रूप से चीन और व्यापार शुल्क के संबंध में आक्रामक रहने की संभावना है।**
 - **Potential impact on U.S.-India relations as Trump prioritizes America-first policies.**
 - **अमेरिका-प्रथम नीतियों को प्राथमिकता देने के कारण अमेरिका-भारत संबंधों पर प्रभाव पड़ सकता है।**

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- **Future Outlook and Recommendations / भविष्य की दृष्टि और सुझाव**
 - **Trump's leadership will likely focus on domestic nationalism, economic protectionism, and immigration control.**
 - **ट्रंप का नेतृत्व घरेलू राष्ट्रवाद, आर्थिक संरक्षणवाद और आव्रजन नियंत्रण पर केंद्रित रहेगा।**
 - **India should navigate relations carefully to maintain strong trade and diplomatic ties with the U.S.**
 - **भारत को अमेरिका के साथ मजबूत व्यापार और कूटनीतिक संबंध बनाए रखने के लिए सतर्क रहना चाहिए।**
 - **Global markets may face uncertainty as Trump's policies could disrupt existing international agreements.**
 - **वैश्विक बाजारों को अनिश्चितता का सामना करना पड़ सकता है क्योंकि ट्रंप की नीतियां मौजूदा अंतरराष्ट्रीय समझौतों को बाधित कर सकती हैं।**

Stalin urges CMs to oppose draft UGC regulations

We believe that many provisions in the draft regulations may pose serious challenges to the academic integrity, autonomy, and inclusive development of State universities. We request the Ministry of Education to withdraw the draft and review the concerns

M.K. STALIN
Tamil Nadu Chief Minister



The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Strongly reiterating the Tamil Nadu government's stand, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Monday wrote to Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan, urging him to withdraw the draft UGC regulations, 2024 and 2025.

Mr. Stalin also wrote to the Chief Ministers of Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Telangana, and West Bengal, all ruled by parties other than the BJP, calling upon them to adopt a resolution in their respective legislatures – as Tamil Nadu had done – against the draft UGC regulations.

“We believe that many such provisions in the draft regulations may pose serious challenges to the academic integrity, autonomy, and inclusive development of State universities. We, therefore, request that the Ministry of Education may withdraw the draft Bills under discussion and review these concerns to better align with the needs of the diverse higher education landscape in India,” he said in his letter to Mr. Pradhan.

In his letter to the Chief Ministers, Mr. Stalin referred to the resolution adopted in the Tamil Nadu Assembly against the draft



UGC regulations and said: “I strongly believe that it is essential for all States to take a similar stand. I request you to consider passing a resolution in your august Assembly on the same lines as ours.”


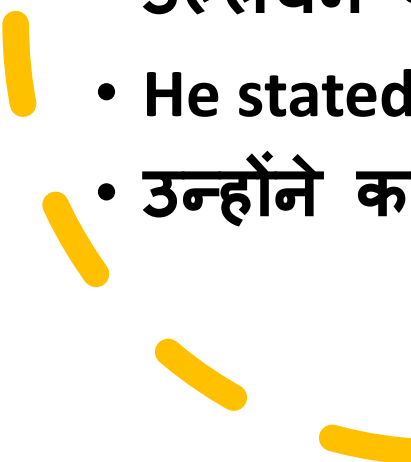
The Chief Minister said these guidelines were a clear infringement of the rights of State governments and would have far-reaching consequences for the autonomy of our universities. “It is crucial that we stand united against these attempts to centralise power and undermine the federal structure of our country.”

In his letter to Mr. Pradhan, Mr. Stalin listed out certain provisions in the 2024 regulations – the “Conduct of Entrance Examinations for UG & PG Admissions, Eligibility for M.Tech./M.E. Programs with a 4-Year (Arts/Science) Degree, Multiple Entry and Multiple Exit (MEME) System” – and expressed his reservations.





In the draft UGC regulations, 2025, Mr. Stalin objected to provisions, including those over the appointment of “Non-Academicians as Vice-Chancellors, Exclusion of State Government from the Vice-Chancellor Search Committee, and Cross-Disciplinary Teachers”.



- **Opposition to UGC Draft Regulations / यूजीसी मसौदा विनियमों का विरोध**
- **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has written to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, urging the withdrawal of the UGC's draft regulations for 2024 and 2025.**
- **तमिलनाडु के मुख्यमंत्री एम.के. स्टालिन ने केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री धर्मेंद्र प्रधान को पत्र लिखकर यूजीसी के 2024 और 2025 के मसौदा विनियमों को वापस लेने का आग्रह किया है।**
- **He argues that the new guidelines challenge academic integrity, autonomy, and state universities' inclusive development.**
- **उन्होंने तर्क दिया कि नए दिशानिर्देश शैक्षणिक अखंडता, स्वायत्तता और राज्य विश्वविद्यालयों के समावेशी विकास को चुनौती देते हैं।**



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- Appeal to Non-BJP State Governments / गैर-भाजपा राज्य सरकारों से अपील
 - Stalin also wrote to Chief Ministers of non-BJP-ruled states—Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, Telangana, and West Bengal—urging them to pass resolutions opposing the UGC draft regulations.
 - स्टालिन ने दिल्ली, हिमाचल प्रदेश, जम्मू-कश्मीर, झारखंड, कर्नाटक, केरल, पंजाब, तेलंगाना और पश्चिम बंगाल के मुख्यमंत्रियों को भी पत्र लिखा, उनसे यूजीसी मसौदा विनियमों के खिलाफ प्रस्ताव पारित करने का आग्रह किया।
 - Tamil Nadu has already passed a resolution in its Legislative Assembly rejecting the regulations.
 - तमिलनाडु ने पहले ही अपनी विधान सभा में इन विनियमों को अस्वीकार करने का प्रस्ताव पारित कर दिया है।
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- **Concerns Over University Autonomy / विश्वविद्यालय स्वायत्तता को लेकर चिंता**
 - **The CM believes the UGC regulations infringe on state rights and threaten university independence.**
 - **मुख्यमंत्री का मानना है कि यूजीसी विनियम राज्यों के अधिकारों का उल्लंघन करते हैं और विश्वविद्यालयों की स्वायत्तता के लिए खतरा हैं।**
 - **He stated that these regulations undermine the federal structure of India.**
 - **उन्होंने कहा कि ये विनियम भारत की संघीय संरचना को कमजोर करते हैं।**
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- **Specific Objections in the Regulations / विनियमों में विशिष्ट आपत्तियां**
 - **Stalin highlighted contentious provisions, including:**
 - **Conduct of entrance exams for UG & PG admissions at the national level**
 - **Eligibility for M.Tech/M.E. programs with a 4-year degree**
 - **Multiple entry and exit system**
 - **स्टालिन ने कुछ विवादास्पद प्रावधानों पर जोर दिया, जिनमें शामिल हैं:**
 - **स्नातक और स्नातकोत्तर प्रवेश के लिए राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर परीक्षाओं का आयोजन**
 - **एम.टेक/एम.ई. कार्यक्रमों के लिए 4 वर्षीय डिग्री को पात्रता मानदंड बनाना**
 - **बहु-प्रवेश और बहु-निकास प्रणाली**

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- **Concerns Over Vice-Chancellor Appointments / कुलपतियों की नियुक्तियों पर चिंता**
 - **The draft UGC regulations propose the appointment of "non-academicians" as vice-chancellors, which Stalin strongly opposed.**
 - **यजीसी मसौदा विनियमों में "गैर-शैक्षणिक व्यक्तियों" को कुलपति के रूप में नियुक्त करने का प्रस्ताव है, जिसका स्टालिन ने कड़ा विरोध किया।**
 - **Other contentious provisions include removing state government representation from the Vice-Chancellor Search Committee and introducing cross-disciplinary teachers.**
 - **अन्य विवादास्पद प्रावधानों में राज्य सरकार को कुलपति खोज समिति से हटाना और अंतःविषयक शिक्षकों की शुरुआत शामिल है।**
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- **Political Context / राजनीतिक संदर्भ**
 - **This move is part of a broader federalism debate, where non-BJP states resist central interference in education.**
 - **यह कदम व्यापक संघवाद बहस का हिस्सा है, जहां गैर-भाजपा राज्य शिक्षा में केंद्रीय हस्तक्षेप का विरोध कर रहे हैं।**
 - **States argue that education is a concurrent subject and should not be centrally controlled.**
 - **राज्य तर्क देते हैं कि शिक्षा एक समवर्ती विषय है और इसे केंद्रीय रूप से नियंत्रित नहीं किया जाना चाहिए।**
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- **Geographical Context / भौगोलिक संदर्भ**
 - **States with strong regional parties, such as Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, have historically opposed central interference in education.**
 - **तमिलनाडु और पश्चिम बंगाल जैसे मजबूत क्षेत्रीय दलों वाले राज्यों ने ऐतिहासिक रूप से शिक्षा में केंद्रीय हस्तक्षेप का विरोध किया है।**
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- **Economic Context / आर्थिक संदर्भ**
- **State governments fund universities significantly; central control may reduce their influence over budget allocations.**
- **राज्य सरकारें विश्वविद्यालयों को बड़े पैमाने पर वित्त पोषण करती हैं; केंद्रीय नियंत्रण उनके बजट आवंटन पर प्रभाव को कम कर सकता है।**



IN BRIEF



SC stays criminal defamation proceedings against Rahul

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed criminal defamation proceedings against Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi for his alleged remarks against Union Minister Amit Shah. A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta issued notice to Navin Jha, a BJP worker who had filed the defamation complaint, and directed him to file a counter affidavit in four weeks. Appearing for Mr. Gandhi, senior advocate A.M. Singhvi and advocate Prasanna S., argued that the defamation proceedings were in breach of seven Supreme Court verdicts.

Two women Maoists killed in Chhattisgarh's Garibanh

Two women Maoists were killed by the security forces in an anti-Naxal operation on Monday, a police officer said. A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) person sustained superficial injuries, the officer said. The operation was carried out in the area of the Manipal Police Station by a team comprising personnel from the District Reserve Guard, the CRPF, and COBRA, an elite unit of the CRPF, from Chhattisgarh, while a Special Operation Group from Odisha was also involved, the officer said.

How many vehicles can one own in the same city, asks SC

It asks if there is a law that ensures commercial, residential complexes had enough parking spots on their premises; Bench proposes orally that public authorities must buy only electric vehicles

Krishnadev Rajagopal NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked if there was any restriction on the number of vehicles a person could own in the same city, and if there was a law that ensured commercial and residential complexes had enough parking spots on their premises.

Is there any embargo on the number of vehicles a person can register? There are people who buy their second and third vehicles in the same city, Justice A.S. Oka, who heads a Bench, asked advocates appearing for the Centre, National Capital Region areas, and local authorities in the capital city. The court was considering a note prepared by the amicus curiae, senior advocate Aparajita Singh, who has recommended a robust and integrated public transport system for reducing the number of private vehicles, a prime cause for rising toxicity levels in air

Polluted skyline: Fog seen over the Rajbhawan in New Delhi on Sunday. SUDHEE KUMAR VERMA

quality, on the roads of the national capital. Oka asked whether development regulations with respect to residential and commercial complexes had provisions which mandate that permission would not be given unless there was room for parking.

Those who can afford to buy apartments in these residential complexes, they have two or three vehicles... Justice Oka remarked.

Ms. Singh said vehicles parked on roads were a common sight in the capital. The Bench proposed orally that public authorities must buy only electric vehicles. "The various government organisations, etc.," Justice Oka said.

Additional Solicitor-General Anshwar Prasad, appearing for the Commission for Air Quality Management, observed in her capacity as the Centre's law officer that the government was "aggressively" going for electric vehicles, but a balance had to be maintained still.

We want to keep a balance as electricity is drawn from coal, Ms. Bhanu explained. The court said it would hear arguments on these concerns which trigger pollution on February 3, 2025. The Bench said public authorities, including the Road and Transport Ministry, the Urban Affairs Ministry, and Delhi Development Authority, must address the court in the case.

Need for parking policy The court said a substantial parking policy was necessary considering the large inflow of vehicles into the capital city.

Study categorises 268 tribes, moots inclusion of 179 communities on SC, ST, and OBC lists

Abhinav Lakshman NEW DELHI

In one of the largest ethnographic studies of its kind, the Anthropological Survey of India (ANSI) and Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) across the country have, for the first time, comprehensively categorised 268 denotified, semi-nomadic, and nomadic tribes that previous commissions believed had never been classified.

The three-year-long study commissioned by a NITI Aayog panel has recommended the inclusion of 179 of these communities on Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes (OBC) lists of 26 States and Union Territories. At least 85 of them are being recommended as fresh additions to these lists.

Among the fresh additions, 46 communities have been recommended for OBC status, 29 for SC status, and 10 for ST status. The greatest number of fresh additions were re-



Inclusive approach: People waiting for caste certificates in Sangareddy district, Telangana. FILE PHOTO

commended for Uttar Pradesh (19), followed by Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan at eight each.

Apart from the fresh additions, the study recommended correcting the categorisation of nine communities, and found that many of the 268 communities had already been categorised, albeit partially, either in State lists or mentioned in Central lists but only of some States.

Top officials of the Social Justice Ministry told The Hindu that the report was "pending" with the N-

ly assimilated into larger communities, changed their names, or migrated to other States/Union Territories.

This report's recommendations to add entries to the SC, ST, OBC lists, which will consequently swell their populations, comes as uncertainty grows over the next Census and whether caste will be enumerated in it, with the clamour for increasing quota percentages to match with latest proportions only growing in the absence of a population count.

Significantly, modalities for inclusion and exclusion set down by the Government of India mandate that any such proposal must originate with the State/Union Territory governments, only after which can approvals be sought from the Office of the Registrar General of India and the National Commission for Backward Classes, respectively, before the government can think of bringing legislation for it.

While the Social Justice Ministry waits for the "finalised" report from the NITI Aayog panel, sources told The Hindu that voices have now emerged within the Development and Welfare Board for DNT, NT, SNT communities (DNTWBC) that are calling into question the premise of classifying DNTs, NTs and SNTs as SC, ST, and OBC.

Their argument is that being a DNT, NT or SNT, adds a layer of discrimination to their lives, because of which the only fair classification would be to create a quota category just for these communities — either a separate vertical or a sub-quota for them within each category.

The ethnographic study was started by the Anthropological Survey of India in February 2020, according to replies to Right to Information Act requests.

The study was commissioned by a special panel constituted by the Prime Minister's Office in February 2019.

Plan to allow non-medical graduates to teach medical students draws criticism

Rishu Shajan Perappadan NEW DELHI

The National Medical Commission (NMC), in its recent draft "Teachers Eligibility Qualifications (TEQ) in Medical Institutions Regulations", has proposed a two-year-old provision allowing non-medical graduates with M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees to teach medical students anatomy, biochemistry, and physiology during a transitional period.

The draft, released on January 17, notes that the qualifications include M.Sc. in medical anatomy, medical biochemistry and medical physiology with a Ph.D. in these disciplines.

The draft has included

Doctors say the move will have a direct impact on the quality of healthcare delivery in India

non-medical faculty as eligible for Senior Resident, Assistant Professor, and higher positions in anatomy, biochemistry, and physiology subjects during a transitional period. While doctors have expressed their displeasure about the move, the Congress party on Monday also hit out at the Central government.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Monday, in his post on X, said, "First, the Modi govt. lowers the cut-off percentiles for admission to post-graduate medical courses through NEET PG. Now it relaxes norms for recruitment of faculty by medical colleges. The National Medical Commission was set up in Sept 2020 by an Act of Parlia-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with newly elected panchayat members in 2018. FILE PHOTO

Final electoral rolls for panchayat polls in J&K published

Vilaita Singh NEW DELHI

The final panchayat electoral rolls for Jammu and Kashmir were published on Monday, indicating the Centre's inclination to hold the local body elections soon. The Assembly election was held in the Union Territory in September last year but Statehood is yet to be restored.

The State Election Commission said 70,00,670 people were eligible to vote in the panchayat polls. The total number of voters for the 2018 panchayat polls was 58,54,208. The panchayat elections were held in the erstwhile J&K State after a gap of seven years.

A senior government official told The Hindu that though the electoral rolls had been revised, the retention of the Jammu and Kashmir Local Bodies Dedicated Backward Classes higher positions in anatomy, biochemistry, and physiology subjects during a transitional period.

The tenure of the Backward Classes commission, which was constituted in

June last year, ended on December 31, and there is no notification in the public domain extending its term. J&K ceased to have panchayats from January 9, 2024 after the five-year term of around 30,000 local representatives came to an end.

Another government source said based on the report of the Commission, the rationalisation of panchayat seats will be done, accommodating the changes made in the reservation structure in the UT, in the past one year. The panchayat elections will happen soon, maybe in the next one month," the second government source said.

ment with great expectations that quality medical education would expand. Some of the moves taken by it, however, are baffling," The commission, while maintaining that the move is aimed at addressing the shortage of faculties in medical colleges, has now asked stakeholders for their feedback within a week.

Lakshya Mittal, president of United Doctors Front, stated that this move undermined the foundation of medical education, which directly impacts the quality of healthcare delivery in our country. He said the decision to permit non-medical practitioners to teach critical pre-clinical subjects such as anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry in medical colleges was deeply concerning.

The transition period must be defined, ensuring it serves as a stopgap rather than a permanent compromise, he said.

CROSSWORD 14387 (Set by Piste Duet)

Crossword grid with numbers 1-14.

- Across 1. Slarry like pathway and I passed out! (6) 5. Cheery facial with dimple captured? heart (8) 9. Imperfect parable camouflaging weak reflex (8) 10. Name some store now, nearby (6) 11. Move back north to protect large prickly shrub (10) 12. Talless animal's spirit (4)

SUDOKU grid with numbers 1-9.

- 13. Accomplished nerd harassed and frequently evoked out (8) 14. Expert biased too right away (6) 15. Protocol for late comers in British university's skewed den (6) 16. Exceed half a dozen duties with favours making a comeback (8) 21. Spooner's regular gal? (4) 22. This derivate system of thought? It upset visiting lion (10) 23. Merely illusory reflection alluringly generating expectations for a redemptive material (8) 24. Working perversely, European country gives up gold crown for a redemptive material (8) 25. Say, lewdster nearby chaps' promptly and? (8) 26. Strangely not beginning to see light, I got extremely lonely (8) Down 2. Leader's small fix (5) 3. Democracy ignores local survival (5) 4. Endless myths about cooking 'best seafood' (7) 5. Island's church could be heartily freezing (3,4) 6. Mean to cut vegetable? (7) 7. Uncorrected sun argued? Menacing (9) 8. How does can be used to get to city? (9) 10. Editor's caution about schooling (9) 15. Mc. Friday went around a reconstructed creamery (5,4) 18. Next, around noon get lunch essentially light? (7) 19. Natural oranges to start with, bananas, grain and a bit of chocolate? (7) 20. Each counter's wholesome (7) 21. Naxite to go over endlessly in retrospect (5) 24. Stall UK symposium exhibiting inverted brains (5)

Sudoku solution grid with numbers 1-9.

FAITH Root cause of activities. What is the root cause of our activities? Whether our physical faculties, called the body, or the soul, called the Atma (which resides in every person). The physical body is called "Prakriti." The Atma is also known as "Jeeva." Prakriti is influenced by three qualities: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, known as "Guna Traya". Atma dictates the body to execute the activities. Atma acts according to our past deeds, known as "Karma". Karma experiences pleasure and pain, comfort and sorrow through the physical faculties. One should mitigate the suffering and boost the performance of good and Godly deeds to eliminate the cycle of births and rebirths. Valayappettil Sri Ramachariar said in a discourse that the attributes of sattva guna are goodness, joy, and nobility. It denotes freedom from fear, violence, wrath, and malice. Rajas represents the quality of energy, motion, and wealth seeking. The features of tamas are inertia, darkness, ignorance, indolence, and sleep. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says sattva generates attachment to happiness, rajas to action, and tamas to negligence. Can fire and water, which are opposite, exist together? Similarly, can the three gunas, which are opposite to each other, exist in the same body? Even though all three are associated with the nature of the self combined with Prakriti in the form of the body, due to previous deeds' dominance, sattva may preponderate over the other two. The fruit of sattva is a good deed, of rajas is pain and of tamas is ignorance. Those who rest in sattva rise upwards, those who abide in rajas remain in the middle, and those who are in tamas go downwards.

How many vehicles can one own in the same city, asks SC

It asks if there is a law that ensures commercial, residential complexes had enough parking spots on their premises; Bench proposes orally that public authorities must buy only electric vehicles

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked if there was any restriction on the number of vehicles a person could own in the same city, and if there was a law that ensured commercial and residential complexes had enough parking spots on their premises.

“Is there any embargo on the number of vehicles a person can register? There are people who buy their second and third vehicles in the same city,” Justice A.S. Oka, who heads a Bench, asked advocates appearing for the Centre, National Capital Region areas, and local authorities in the capital city.

The court was considering a note prepared by the *amicus curiae*, senior advocate Aparajita Singh, which has recommended a robust and integrated public transport system for reducing the number of private vehicles, a prime cause for rising toxicity levels in air



Polluted skyline: Fog seen over the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

quality, on the roads of the national capital.

Justice Oka asked whether development regulations with respect to residential and commercial complexes had provisions which mandate that permission would not be given unless there was room for parking.

“Those who can afford to buy apartments in these residential complexes, they have two or three vehicles...,” Justice Oka remarked.

The court said building regulations must make it clear how many parking spots were mandatory in residential and commercial complexes. “In some cities, an apartment is given two parking spaces, or at least one per apartment,” Justice Oka said.

Need for parking policy

The court said a substantial parking policy was necessary considering the large inflow of vehicles into the capital city.


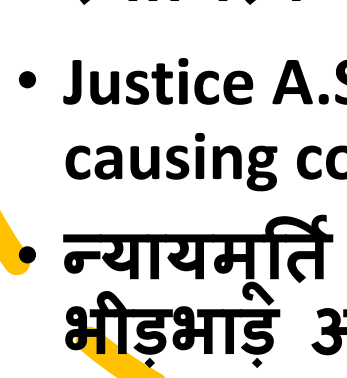
Ms. Singh said vehicles parked on roads were a common sight in the capital.


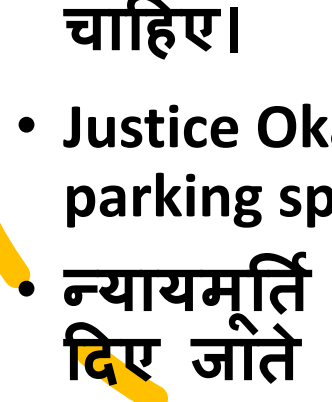
The Bench proposed orally that public authorities must buy only electric vehicles. “The various governments, corporations, etc.,” Justice Oka said.

Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Commission for Air Quality Management, observed in her capacity as the Centre’s law officer that the government was “aggressively” going for electric vehicles, but a balance had to be maintained still.



“We want to keep a balance as electricity is drawn from coal,” Ms. Bhati explained.



The court said it would hear arguments on these concerns which trigger pollution on February 3, 2025. The Bench said authorities, including the Road and Transport Ministry, the Urban Affairs Ministry and Delhi Development Authority, must address the court in the case.

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- Supreme Court's Query on Vehicle Ownership / सुप्रीम कोर्ट का वाहन स्वामित्व पर सवाल
 - The Supreme Court questioned if there is a law restricting the number of vehicles a person can own in the same city.
 - सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने पूछा कि क्या कोई कानून है जो एक ही शहर में व्यक्ति के स्वामित्व वाले वाहनों की संख्या को सीमित करता है।
 - Justice A.S. Oka raised concerns about people buying multiple vehicles, causing congestion and pollution.
 - न्यायमूर्ति ए.एस. ओका ने लोगों के कई वाहन खरीदने से होने वाली भीड़भाड़ और प्रदूषण को लेकर चिंता जताई।
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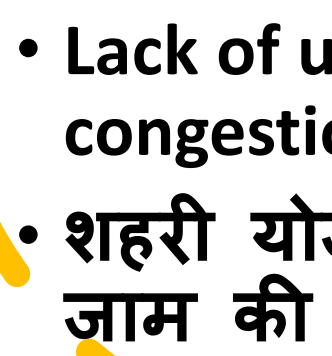
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- **Parking Issues and Development Regulations / पार्किंग समस्याएं और विकास विनियम**
 - **The court discussed whether commercial and residential complexes must ensure sufficient parking space before allowing vehicle ownership.**
 - **अदालत ने चर्चा की कि क्या व्यावसायिक और आवासीय परिसरों को वाहन स्वामित्व की अनुमति देने से पहले पर्याप्त पार्किंग स्थान सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए।**
 - **Justice Oka pointed out that apartments in some cities come with multiple parking spots, leading to excessive vehicle ownership.**
 - **न्यायमूर्ति ओका ने कहा कि कुछ शहरों में अपार्टमेंट के साथ कई पार्किंग स्पॉट दिए जाते हैं, जिससे अधिक वाहन स्वामित्व की प्रवृत्ति बढ़ती है।**
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- Supreme Court's Oral Proposal on Electric Vehicles / सुप्रीम कोर्ट का इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों पर मौखिक प्रस्ताव
- The Bench orally suggested that public authorities should only buy electric vehicles to combat pollution.
- पीठ ने मौखिक रूप से सुझाव दिया कि सार्वजनिक प्राधिकरणों को केवल इलेक्ट्रिक वाहन खरीदने चाहिए ताकि प्रदूषण से निपटा जा सके।
- The court observed that government bodies are aggressively promoting electric vehicles, but a balance must be maintained as electricity is generated from coal.
- अदालत ने देखा कि सरकारी निकाय आक्रामक रूप से इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों को बढ़ावा दे रहे हैं, लेकिन संतुलन बनाए रखना आवश्यक है क्योंकि बिजली कोयले से उत्पन्न होती है।



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- **Arguments by Legal Representatives / कानूनी प्रतिनिधियों के तर्क**
 - **Senior advocate Aparajita Singh recommended an improved public transport system to reduce private vehicle ownership.**
 - **वरिष्ठ अधिवक्ता अपराजिता सिंह ने निजी वाहनों के स्वामित्व को कम करने के लिए एक बेहतर सार्वजनिक परिवहन प्रणाली की सिफारिश की।**
 - **Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati stated that the government is actively encouraging electric vehicle adoption.**
 - **अतिरिक्त सॉलिसिटर-जनरल ऐश्वर्या भाटी ने कहा कि सरकार सक्रिय रूप से इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों को अपनाने को बढ़ावा दे रही है।**
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- **Need for Parking Policy / पार्किंग नीति की आवश्यकता**
 - **The Supreme Court emphasized that there must be a clear policy on mandatory parking spaces in urban residential and commercial buildings.**
 - **सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने जोर दिया कि शहरी आवासीय और वाणिज्यिक भवनों में अनिवार्य पार्किंग स्थानों पर स्पष्ट नीति होनी चाहिए।**
 - **Authorities, including the Road and Transport Ministry, Urban Affairs Ministry, and Delhi Development Authority, must present a solution.**
 - **सड़क और परिवहन मंत्रालय, शहरी मामलों के मंत्रालय और दिल्ली विकास प्राधिकरण सहित अधिकारियों को समाधान प्रस्तुत करना होगा।**
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- **Political Context / राजनीतिक संदर्भ**
 - **The Indian government is pushing for electric mobility to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and combat urban pollution.**
 - **भारत सरकार जीवाश्म ईंधन पर निर्भरता कम करने और शहरी प्रदूषण से निपटने के लिए इलेक्ट्रिक मोबिलिटी को बढ़ावा दे रही है।**
 - **State governments have varying policies on parking, registration, and taxation of private vehicles.**
 - **राज्य सरकारों की निजी वाहनों की पार्किंग, पंजीकरण और कराधान पर विभिन्न नीतियां हैं।**

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- **Geographical Context / भौगोलिक संदर्भ**
 - Major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru are facing extreme congestion due to high vehicle density.
 - दिल्ली, मुंबई और बेंगलुरु जैसे प्रमुख शहरों में अत्यधिक वाहन घनत्व के कारण गंभीर भीड़भाड़ हो रही है।
 - Lack of urban planning has led to haphazard parking and traffic congestion.
 - शहरी योजना की कमी के कारण अनियमित पार्किंग और यातायात जाम की समस्या बढ़ रही है।
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- **Economic Context / आर्थिक संदर्भ**
 - **The automobile sector is a major contributor to India's economy, but excessive car ownership is straining urban infrastructure.**
 - **ऑटोमोबाइल क्षेत्र भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था में एक प्रमुख योगदानकर्ता है, लेकिन अत्यधिक कार स्वामित्व शहरी बुनियादी ढांचे पर दबाव डाल रहा है।**
 - **Electric vehicle adoption is expected to boost green economy initiatives and reduce oil imports.**
 - **इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों को अपनाने से हरित अर्थव्यवस्था पहल को बढ़ावा मिलेगा और तेल आयात में कमी आएगी।**
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- **Historical Context / ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ**
 - **Rapid urbanization over the past decades has resulted in rising vehicle ownership and inadequate infrastructure to support it.**
 - **पिछले दशकों में तेजी से शहरीकरण के कारण वाहन स्वामित्व में वृद्धि हुई है और इसे समर्थन देने के लिए अपर्याप्त बुनियादी ढांचा है।**
 - **Past attempts at congestion pricing and vehicle ownership restrictions in global cities like Singapore and London have been successful.**
 - **सिंगापुर और लंदन जैसे वैश्विक शहरों में भीड़-भाड़ की कीमत और वाहन स्वामित्व प्रतिबंध लगाने के पिछले प्रयास सफल रहे हैं।**
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- **Recommendations / सिफारिशें**
 - **A well-defined urban parking policy must be implemented to manage vehicle density.**
 - **वाहन घनत्व को प्रबंधित करने के लिए एक अच्छी तरह से परिभाषित शहरी पार्किंग नीति लागू की जानी चाहिए।**
 - **Authorities should promote carpooling and shared mobility solutions.**
 - **अधिकारियों को कारपूलिंग और साझा गतिशीलता समाधानों को बढ़ावा देना चाहिए।**
 - **Stronger incentives for electric vehicle adoption, including tax benefits and charging infrastructure.**
 - **इलेक्ट्रिक वाहन अपनाने के लिए मजबूत प्रोत्साहन, जिसमें कर लाभ और चार्जिंग बुनियादी ढांचा शामिल है।**
 - **Regulations should ensure that each new vehicle purchase is backed by proof of parking availability.**
 - **नियम यह सुनिश्चित करने चाहिए कि प्रत्येक नए वाहन की खरीद के लिए पार्किंग उपलब्धता का प्रमाण हो।**

Capex quandary

Private investments remain tentative amid growth concerns

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centre has been using public capital expenditure on infrastructure to pump prime the economic recovery. The mantra has been that infrastructure building will stoke demand for products such as cement and steel, generate jobs in construction, and together trigger a strong multiplier effect on the economy, eventually creating conducive conditions for private investors in greenfield and brownfield projects. In Budget 2024-25, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the government will endeavour to maintain strong fiscal support for infrastructure over the next five years, in conjunction with imperatives of other priorities and fiscal consolidation. She announced ₹11 lakh crore of capex spends this year, amounting to 3.4% of GDP. That goal is unlikely to be attained partly due to spending curbs in the post-affected first quarter. While industry has urged the Centre to continue the capex push in 2025-26 as well, it has failed to respond to the government's constant nudges and persuasions to ramp up their own operations.

Data show that two of this year's first three quarters have recorded a notable sequential decline in private investment plans, particularly by domestic industry. In Q1, private investment plans dropped to multi-year lows, and though the July-September quarter recorded a recovery in investment intentions, that uptick has dissipated in Q3. Projects Today data suggest domestic investment value dropped 1.4% from Q2, while foreign projects' value dropped over 22% from a year ago as per the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy. There are many factors playing on corporate risk-taking capacity – weak Q2 results, global uncertainties, sagging exports and waning demand in more lucrative urban markets. Going by current indications, including the early bird Q3 results, demand has not really improved, and there is a tenable pressure on factory capacities to warrant expansions. For a sustainable breakout from this slowdown, private capital should take a driving seat because there are limits to enhancing public capex while maintaining fiscal rectitude and providing for myriad welfare schemes. The government must accept that exhortations to industry are unlikely to spur fresh orders, and incentives focused on themes such as import-substitution are insufficient. Not one new rupee will be deployed if a project is unviable and demand flaky. Policy focus should remain firmly on ensuring the ground is ripe to investigate investments and easing the realisation of such plans into billowing chimneys and new jobs. For that, boosting incomes and consumption is critical as is expediting macro- and micro-level reforms. That an economic policy framework outlining next generation reforms, promised in the Budget, has not been heard of since then, is not very comforting.

Go, kho kho, go

India needs to pump in more time and resources into rural sports

Kho kho is not, by any stretch of imagination, among the world's most popular sports. Even in India, where the game is said to have originated several centuries ago, it has not yet caught the imagination. Not many would have noticed India winning the men's and women's titles at the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup in New Delhi on Sunday. Pratik Walker's men and Priyanka Ingles's women flourished but their collective achievements should not be cause to gloss over the fact that kho kho is not a global sport yet. Under the aegis of the World Cup, India and India winning both the titles could offer a boost to this particular game with a rural heart. Since India is not really a major power in international sport at large, any world title is a welcome addition to the not-so-overflowing cupboard. There are, of course, a few sports in which India is a superpower, such as cricket and chess. Indian cricket may be going through its lowest phase in recent times – notwithstanding the triumph in the T20 World Cup last year but in the main game on 64 squares, India's Grandmasters have been authoring one success story after another, the latest being P. Anand winning the World Chess Championship and Koneru Humpy regaining the women's World rapid championships.

India's brilliant mind, however, have not received the acclaim or support they deserve, especially after the historic double gold at the Chess Olympiad back in September, from the government or corporate houses. The government could do a lot to raise the profile of games such as kho kho, chess and Olympic disciplines. The disappointment at the Paris Olympics, where India failed to win even a single gold and finished 71st, below Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan, was another stark reminder of the state of Indian sport. India won six medals but its performance was below expectations. India's various sports federations need to review their own functioning. And they could, in fact, learn lessons from how the Board of Control for Cricket in India, for all the criticism directed against it, is running its sport, improving infrastructure and sharing the growth in revenue with players. India may largely be a single-sport country, unlike the United States or Australia, but in games such as kabaddi, with its Pro Kabaddi League, has shown that there is scope for Indian sport on television beyond cricket. The governments at the Centre and the States, could also do better by developing infrastructure and nurturing varied sport such as kho kho. It is also time to find out if kho kho is a stifling the huge budgetary spend.

UGC's draft regulation has serious constitutional issues

The draft regulation by the University Grants Commission (UGC) on the selection and appointment of vice chancellors of universities has evoked protests by non-Bharatiya Janata Party-headed State governments. Their main objection against this regulation is that it constitutes a violation of the federal principles enshrined in the Constitution of India. The State governments concerned have demanded its withdrawal.

The UGC has sought to amend Regulation 2010 that relates to the selection and appointment of vice chancellors by widening the area of selection. Under the existing regulations, a vice chancellor can be selected only from among academics who have a minimum experience of 10 years as professor. Through this amendment, the UGC declares that professionals with 10-plus years of experience in industry, public administration or public policy, shall also be considered.

The draft regulation raises serious constitutional issues which need to be examined by separating the political context of protest and a possible political reaction from the UGC or the party in power.

The objective of the UGC Act

The University Grants Commission Act, 1956 was not meant by Parliament to make provision for "the co-ordination and determination of standards in Universities and for that purpose, to establish the University Grants Commission". The Act, therefore, mandates the UGC to take all steps as it thinks fit for the promotion and the coordination of university education, and for the examination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in universities. For performing these functions the UGC can allocate funds to the universities essentially for the maintenance and development of the university education. The measure necessary for the improvement of university education, advise the Union or State governments on the allocation of grants to any university for any general or specific purpose, collect information on all matters relating to university education in India and other countries and make them available to any university, regulation of fees.... Under Section 26 of the UGC Act empowers the UGC to make regulations for implementing the provisions of the Act. But it is made clear in this section that these regulations need to be consistent with the Act and the rules made there under. The most important among these regulations relate to defining the qualifications required of a person to be appointed to the teaching staff in a university, the minimum standards of instructions for the grant of any



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degree by a university, and regulating the maintenance of standards and the coordination of work or facilities in universities.

It is not the job of the UGC

The crucial point that needs to be considered here is whether the regulation made by the UGC in respect of the selection and appointment of the appointment of vice chancellor is consistent with the provisions of the UGC Act. As a matter of fact, it is not. The regulation in question relates to the selection and the appointment of vice chancellor. The fundamental objective of the Act is to determine the standards in universities and the promotion and the coordination of university education. To lay down the standards of teaching and to prescribe the qualifications of teaching staff whose job is to give instructions, is the main function of the UGC – which it does by making periodic regulations. But the problem arises when this statutory body begins to regulate an area which is not a part of the parent Act. Rules, and regulations are technically called subordinate legislation. The subordinate legislation can be made only in consonance with the provisions of the Act. If the regulation goes outside the scope of the Act, it will be *ultra vires* the Act, and hence invalid.

The crasse reading of the Act would show that it was not meant to prescribe the qualifications or mode of selection of vice chancellors. All the universities, whether under the Union or the States, are established under a statute made by the respective legislatures. Therefore, it is the legislature which prescribes the qualifications, mode of selection, and conditions of service of vice chancellors is not the job of the UGC. The selection and the appointment of vice chancellors cannot be treated as a function of the UGC connected with maintaining the standards of education or promotion and coordination of the university education. The statement made in *Suresh Patilkhede vs The Chancellor Universities of Maharashtra and Others* (2018) corroborates this view in the following words: "we are of the view that qualifications and method of appointment of vice-chancellors are not a function of the UGC. The University cannot be treated as satisfying the 'direct impact' test [on the standards of education]. Therefore, it is not to be read under Section 26 of the UGC Act, the UGC has no power to make regulations in respect of the selection and the appointment of vice chancellors."

The problem arises when the UGC begins to regulate an area which is not a part of the parent Act – namely the selection and the appointment of university vice chancellors

of some vice chancellors in the past. The Bombay High Court in the *Suresh Patilkhede case (supra)* took the view that "Regulation 7.3.0 of UGC Regulations, 2010 being a subordinate legislation under an Act of Parliament cannot override plenary legislation enacted by the State Legislature..." However, the Supreme Court of India, in *Kalyani Mathivanan vs KVJ Jayaram and Ors (AIR 2015 SC375 para 22)* overruled it by holding "we hold that the UGC Regulations, though not a subordinate legislation has binding effect on the Universities to which it applies..." The reason given by the Court for reaching this conclusion is that "it is only when both the Houses of the Parliament approve the regulation, the same can be given effect". It may be clarified here that Parliament does not formally approve any rule or regulation laid in the House. It can only amend a rule which has already come into effect before it is so laid; if Parliament amends the rule, it will, thereafter, be effective in the amended form. With due respect to their lordships, the observation of the Court does not correctly reflect the parliamentary procedure relating to the laying down of rules and regulations in the Houses of Parliament.

The question whether the UGC regulations override a State law can be answered only in terms of Article 254 of the Constitution which deals with repugnancy. Under this Article, if a State law is repugnant to the central law, the State law, to the extent of repugnancy, be void. But regulation made by the UGC, a central law within the meaning of Article 254, clause (2) of this Article says that if the law made by the legislature of a state has been reserved for the consideration of the President and has received his assent, shall prevail in the State. In this clause the word 'law' simply means a law passed by the legislature and sent to the President. It does not include the rules and regulations which are framed only after assent is received. So, when a State law is a Bill passed by both Houses of Parliament and assented to by the President, and certainly not the subordinate legislation.

A key ruling
In any case, the Court made a significant ruling on the question of mandatory application of Regulation 7.3.0 of the UGC relating to the selection and appointment of vice chancellors in the *Kalyani Mathivanan case (supra)* it says: "However, the finding of the Bombay High Court that Regulation 7.3.0 has to be treated as recommendatory in nature is upheld in so far as it relates to Universities and Colleges under the State Legislature." This ruling may perhaps help resolve the present controversy.

Prioritising IMEC is in America's best interest

The United States-India relationship has evolved into an increasingly vital strategic partnership ever since the Clinton administration laid the foundation for a new direction in the 1990s. Today, broad bipartisan consensus supports building upon these ties even further, driven by converging interests in economic growth, regional security, and global democratic values. As global dynamics shift, the importance of this relationship for the Trump administration becomes even more pronounced.



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is Executive Director of IndusGroup

The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) agreement presents a tremendous opportunity for President Donald Trump to solidify this multilateral partnership while advancing both the strategic interests of the United States and India. By leading the effort to secure cooperation among the participating nations, the U.S. can help create a robust economic corridor to ensure free and open trade routes, with enhanced energy security and technological innovation, which, in turn, will also benefit American companies.

More conceptual now
Announced in 2023, IMEC represents an ambitious vision to forge an integrated network spanning three vital regions through advanced physical and digital infrastructure. The corridor aims to develop efficient transportation routes, including railways, shipping networks, and maritime connections, while also establishing cross-border electricity and hydrogen pipelines and digital communication cables. The end goals are to be to enhance trade connectivity and reduce transportation costs, while diversifying global supply chains and promoting deeper economic integration among participating countries (India, the U.S., the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Germany, and the European Commission).

At the moment, it is reasonable to suggest that IMEC is more conceptual than concrete. Meeting its lofty goals requires extensive planning and cooperation. The Trump administration's leadership on this matter could enhance its legacy on the international stage. By supporting IMEC, the U.S. and India can establish a

compelling alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), creating a more balanced global economic architecture that aligns with western democratic principles.

IMEC was never destined to be a straightforward endeavour. Each participating nation faces a complex calculus of investment in political will and economic strategy. The corridor represents a significant challenge to established relationships with the West, and have spearheaded efforts for its implementation. Without regular, strategic engagement, there is a significant risk of creating uneven economic landscape that could breed tension and political friction among participating nations. The economic opportunities that this corridor offers are not just for coastal regions and primary ports but also that trade connectivity could become crucial nodes in this expansive trade network. Even within the region, we have already seen countries such as Greece and Italy, trade agreements to complement IMEC.

Kapil Sharma
is Principal at Kapil Sharma Strategies and Non-Resident Fellow, Atlantic Council

The U.S. and India must ensure the completion of this project, which represents a fundamental reimagining of regional economic cooperation

investment. By positioning itself as an alternative to the BRI, the corridor allows India to strengthen diplomatic ties with West Asian and European countries.

Better for the environment
There are implications to this deal that could impact the earth's climate health. India has emerged as a significant player in green hydrogen development, positioning itself as a potential global leader in this emerging clean energy technology. The corridor offers ambitious initiatives to develop green hydrogen as a strategic component of its energy transition and decarbonisation efforts.

India is collaborating with international partners such as Germany and Japan, developing infrastructure for green hydrogen production, storage, and transportation. This will help reduce carbon emissions, decrease dependence on fossil fuel imports and create new job opportunities in emerging green technology sectors.

The Trump administration's role in facilitating the Abraham Accords proved instrumental in creating the diplomatic conditions that made IMEC possible. Former US President Joe Biden has been a strong proponent of IMEC. Looking ahead, questions remain about IMEC's future under potential new U.S. leadership. An intriguing factor is Mr. Trump's warm personal relationship with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This rapport could prove significant for ongoing relations. Now that there is a peace agreement between Israel and Hamas, both leaders could facilitate the much needed (and required) meeting of IMEC participants to discuss the next steps.

This endeavour transcends traditional infrastructure development; it represents a fundamental reimagining of regional economic cooperation that requires unprecedented levels of coordination among diverse stakeholders. The U.S. and India, as key architects of the corridor, must work closely to shepherd this project to completion, recognising both its economic significance and environmental implications for all participating countries.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Poor demand

The economist, John Maynard Keynes, wrote that "The increase in income and consumption and investment demand that enhances employment, income and output in the economy. That investment by the private sector fell 1.4% in Q3 in India is a case

in point. The sole way out is to increase capital expenditure by the Centre and State governments. Keynes' work, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, one feels, is germane at all times. **S. Ramakrishnaswamy,** Chennai

'Lit For Life'
Some experts seem to have missed the fact that, in the Union and State government, the general election was not on a level playing field. The BJP's hat-trick performance needs to be recognised. There is no ground to congratulate every BJP voter is a believer

of Hindutva (January 20). There are many who do not support the politics of Narendra Modi and the State government of our vibrant democracy. **S. Seeharaj,** Chennai

That "Young India is hankering for a new kind of politics" sounds surprising. While the well-educated youth clamours for other continents, one also has the least educated in search of a livelihood. But do the young really vote? In a huge populated nation as ours, no political party can ever claim to solve every issue. However, great minds can help ease

problems for the people. Political parties should focus on the young to ensure that they serve and not other nations. **Rajasekharan Pavan,** Secunderabad

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name.

UGC's draft regulation has serious constitutional issues

The draft regulation by the University Grants Commission (UGC) on the selection and appointment of vice chancellors of universities has evoked protests by non-Bharatiya Janata Party-headed State governments. Their main objection against this regulation is that it constitutes a violation of the federal principles enshrined in the Constitution of India. The State governments concerned have demanded its withdrawal.

The UGC has sought to amend Regulation 2010 that relates to the selection and appointment of vice chancellors by widening the area of selection. Under the existing regulations, a vice chancellor can be selected only from among academicians who have a minimum experience of 10 years as professor. Through this amendment, the UGC declares that professionals with 10-plus years of experience in industry, public administration or public policy, shall also be considered.

The draft regulation raises serious constitutional issues which need to be examined by separating the political context of protest and a possible political reaction from the UGC or the party in power.

The objective of the UGC Act

The University Grants Commission Act, 1956 was enacted by Parliament to make provision for "the co-ordination and determination of standards in Universities and for that purpose, to establish the University Grants Commission". The Act, therefore, mandates the UGC to take all steps as it thinks fit for the promotion and the coordination of university education, and for the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination and research in universities. For performing these functions the UGC can allocate funds to the universities essentially for the maintenance and development of the universities, recommend measures necessary for the improvement of university education, advise the Union or State governments on the allocation of grants to universities for any general or specific purpose, collect information on all matters relating to university education in India and other countries and make them available to any university, regulation of fees.....

Section 26 of the UGC Act empowers the UGC to make regulations for implementing the mandate of the Act. But it is made clear in this section that these regulations need to be consistent with the Act and the rules made there under. The most important among these regulations relate to defining the qualifications required of a person to be appointed to the teaching staff in a university, the minimum standards of instructions for the grant of any



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The problem arises when the UGC begins to regulate an area which is not a part of the parent Act — namely the selection and the appointment of university vice chancellors

degree by a university, and regulating the maintenance of standards and the coordination of work or facilities in universities.

It is not the job of the UGC

The crucial point that needs to be considered here is whether the regulation made by the UGC in respect of the selection, qualification and appointment of vice chancellor is consistent with the provisions of the UGC Act. As a matter of fact, the Act does not contain any provisions relating to the selection and the appointment of vice chancellors. The fundamental objective of the Act is to determine standards in universities and the promotion and the coordination of university education. To lay down the standards of teaching and to prescribe the qualifications of teaching staff whose job is to give instructions, is the main function of the UGC — which it does by making periodic regulations. But the problem arises when this statutory body begins to regulate an area which is not a part of the parent Act. Rules, and regulations are technically called subordinate legislation. The subordinate legislation can be made only in consonance with the provisions in the Act. If the regulation goes outside the scope of the Act, it will be *ultra vires* the Act, and hence invalid.

A close reading of the Act would show that it was not meant to prescribe the qualifications or mode of selection of vice chancellors. All universities, whether under the Union or the States, are established under a statute made by the respective legislature. Therefore, it is the legislature which prescribes the qualifications, mode of selection, and conditions of service of vice chancellors. It is not the job of the UGC. The selection and the appointment of vice chancellors cannot be considered to be an exercise connected with maintaining the standards of education or promotion and coordination of university education. The Bombay High Court in *Suresh Patilkhede vs The Chancellor Universities of Maharashtra and Others* (2011) corroborates this view in the following words "we are of the view that qualifications and method of appointment of Pro-Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of the University cannot be treated as satisfying the 'direct impact' test [on the standards of education]". Therefore, it is safe to assume that under Section 26 of the UGC Act, the UGC has no mandate to make any regulation in respect of the selection and the appointment of vice chancellors.


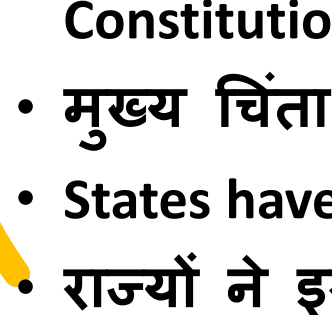
An interesting constitutional question which arises in the context of the UGC's regulations is whether a regulation can over-ride an Act passed by a State legislature. This question came up in the context of the termination of the appointment

of some vice chancellors in the past. The Bombay High Court in the *Suresh Patilkhede case (supra)* took the view that "Regulation 7.3.0 of UGC Regulations, 2010 being a subordinate legislation under an Act of Parliament cannot override plenary legislation enacted by the State Legislature...." However, the Supreme Court of India, in *Kalyani Mathivanan vs K.V. Jeyaraj and Ors (AIR 2015 SC1875 para 22)* overruled it by holding "we hold that the U.G.C. Regulations through a subordinate legislation has binding effect on the Universities to which it applies...." The reason given by the Court for reaching this conclusion is that "it is only when both the Houses of the Parliament approve the regulation, the same can be given effect". It may be clarified here that Parliament does not formally approve any rule or regulation laid in the House. It can only amend a rule which has already come into effect before it is so laid; if Parliament amends the rule, it will, thereafter, be effective in the amended form. With due respect to their lordships, the observation of the Court does not correctly reflect the parliamentary procedure relating to the laying down of rules and regulations in the Houses of Parliament.


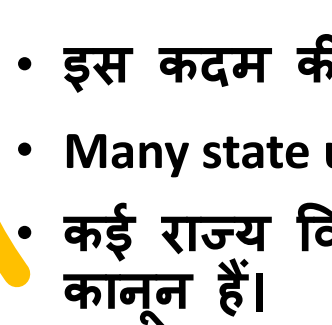
The question whether the UGC regulations override a State law can be answered only in terms of Article 254 of the Constitution which deals with repugnancy. Under this Article, if a State law is repugnant to the central law, the State law, to the extent of repugnancy, be void. But is a regulation made by the UGC, a central law within the meaning of Article 254? Clause (2) of this Article says that if the law made by the legislature of a state has been reserved for the consideration of the President and has received his ascent, it shall prevail in the State. In this clause the word 'law' simply means the Bill passed by the legislature and sent to the President. It does not include the rules and regulations which are framed only after ascent is received. So, what overrides a State law is a Bill passed by both Houses of Parliament and assented to by the President, and certainly not the subordinate legislation.

A key ruling

In any case, the Court made a significant ruling on the question of mandatory application of Regulation 7.3.0 of the UGC relating to the selection and appointment of vice chancellors in the *Kalyani Mathivanan case (supra)* it says: "However, the finding of the Bombay High Court that Regulation 7.3.0 has to be treated as recommendatory in nature is upheld in so far as it relates to Universities and Colleges under the State Legislation." This ruling may perhaps help resolve the present controversy.



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- Issue with UGC's Draft Regulation / यूजीसी के मसौदा विनियमन से संबंधित समस्या
 - The UGC's draft regulation on the selection and appointment of vice-chancellors has sparked protests from non-BJP state governments.
 - यूजीसी के कल्पतियों की नियुक्ति और चयन पर मसौदा विनियमन ने गैर-बीजेपी राज्य सरकारों से विरोध उत्पन्न किया है।
 - The primary concern is that it violates the federal structure enshrined in the Constitution.
 - मुख्य चिंता यह है कि यह संविधान में निहित संघीय ढांचे का उल्लंघन करता है।
 - States have demanded its withdrawal.
 - राज्यों ने इसकी वापसी की मांग की है।
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- UGC's Objective and Powers / यूजीसी का उद्देश्य और शक्तियां
- UGC was established under the UGC Act, 1956, to coordinate and determine university education standards.
- यूजीसी को 1956 के यूजीसी अधिनियम के तहत विश्वविद्यालयी शिक्षा के मानकों के समन्वय और निर्धारण के लिए स्थापित किया गया था।
- It can allocate grants, formulate policies, and maintain quality but does not have direct administrative control over state universities.
- यह अनुदान आवंटित कर सकता है, नीतियां बना सकता है, और गुणवत्ता बनाए रख सकता है लेकिन राज्य विश्वविद्यालयों पर सीधा प्रशासनिक नियंत्रण नहीं रखता।



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- **Conflict Between UGC and State Authority / यूजीसी और राज्य प्राधिकरण के बीच संघर्ष**
 - **The draft regulation seeks to amend the 2010 regulation to allow professionals with 10+ years of experience in law, public administration, and policy to become vice-chancellors, instead of only experienced academicians.**
 - **मसौदा विनियमन 2010 के विनियमन को संशोधित करना चाहता है ताकि 10+ वर्षों के अनुभव वाले पेशेवरों को कुलपति बनने की अनुमति दी जा सके, बजाय केवल अनुभवी शिक्षाविदों के।**
 - **This move has been criticized as an encroachment on state powers.**
 - **इस कदम की राज्य शक्तियों के अतिक्रमण के रूप में आलोचना की गई है।**
 - **Many state universities have their own laws governing vice-chancellor appointments.**
 - **कई राज्य विश्वविद्यालयों के पास कुलपति नियुक्तियों को नियंत्रित करने वाले अपने स्वयं के कानून हैं।**
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- Constitutional Conflict and Legal Precedents / संवैधानिक संघर्ष और कानूनी मिसालें
 - The draft regulation contradicts judicial precedents stating that state governments have the authority over state universities.
 - मसौदा विनियमन न्यायिक मिसालों के विपरीत है, जो कहती हैं कि राज्य सरकारों का राज्य विश्वविद्यालयों पर अधिकार है।
 - The Supreme Court ruled in *Kalyani Mathivanan v. KV Jayaraj* that UGC regulations apply only when explicitly mentioned in law.
 - सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने *कल्याणी मथिवानन बनाम के.वी. जयराज* मामले में फैसला सुनाया कि यूजीसी विनियम केवल तभी लागू होते हैं जब इसे कानून में स्पष्ट रूप से उल्लेख किया जाए।
 - The Bombay High Court also stated in *Suresh Palshikar v. The Chancellor of Pune University* that university management is a state matter.
 - बॉम्बे हाईकोर्ट ने *सुरेश पालशिकर बनाम पुणे विश्वविद्यालय के कुलपति* मामले में भी कहा कि विश्वविद्यालय प्रबंधन एक राज्य का विषय है।



- UGC's Overreach and Constitutional Provisions / यूजीसी की सीमा से अधिक शक्ति और संवैधानिक प्रावधान
- The article argues that UGC is trying to regulate areas that are beyond its jurisdiction, violating the separation of powers.
- लेख तर्क देता है कि यूजीसी अपनी अधिकार क्षेत्र से बाहर जाकर उन क्षेत्रों को विनियमित करने की कोशिश कर रहा है, जो शक्तियों के पृथक्करण के सिद्धांत का उल्लंघन है।
- Article 254(2) of the Constitution states that state laws shall prevail unless the central law explicitly overrides them.
- संविधान के अनुच्छेद 254(2) के अनुसार, राज्य के कानून लागू रहेंगे जब तक कि केंद्रीय कानून स्पष्ट रूप से उन्हें प्रतिस्थापित न करे।






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- **Political Context / राजनीतिक संदर्भ**
 - This is part of a larger debate on federalism, where states resist central control over higher education.
 - यह संघवाद पर एक व्यापक बहस का हिस्सा है, जहां राज्य उच्च शिक्षा पर केंद्रीय नियंत्रण का विरोध कर रहे हैं।
 - Many opposition-led states view this as an attempt to weaken state autonomy.
 - कई विपक्ष-शासित राज्य इसे राज्य स्वायत्तता को कमजोर करने का प्रयास मानते हैं।
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- **Geographical Context / भौगोलिक संदर्भ**
 - **Different states have their own university laws, making a uniform central policy difficult.**
 - **विभिन्न राज्यों के अपने विश्वविद्यालय कानून हैं, जिससे एक समान केंद्रीय नीति बनाना कठिन हो जाता है।**
 - **Southern and Eastern states like Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have strongly opposed such regulations.**
 - **तमिलनाडु और पश्चिम बंगाल जैसे दक्षिणी और पूर्वी राज्यों ने ऐसे विनियमों का कड़ा विरोध किया है।**
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- **Economic Context / आर्थिक संदर्भ**
 - **State universities rely heavily on state funds, making direct central control over appointments financially unfeasible.**
 - **राज्य विश्वविद्यालय बड़े पैमाने पर राज्य वित्त पोषण पर निर्भर करते हैं, जिससे नियक्तियों पर सीधा केंद्रीय नियंत्रण आर्थिक रूप से अव्यवहारिक हो जाता है।**
 - **If the central government takes over appointments, states might reduce funding for universities.**
 - **यदि केंद्र सरकार नियक्तियों को अपने हाथ में लेती है, तो राज्य विश्वविद्यालयों के लिए वित्त पोषण कम कर सकते हैं।**
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- **Historical Context / ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ**
 - **Historically, Indian universities were state-controlled, with the UGC playing only an advisory role.**
 - **ऐतिहासिक रूप से, भारतीय विश्वविद्यालय राज्य-नियंत्रित थे, और यूजीसी की भूमिका केवल परामर्शदात्री थी।**
 - **Attempts to centralize education have been resisted since independence.**
 - **स्वतंत्रता के बाद से शिक्षा के केंद्रीकरण के प्रयासों का विरोध किया गया है।**
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- Implications / संभावित प्रभाव
 - If implemented, the regulation could lead to legal challenges from states.
 - यदि इसे लागू किया गया, तो राज्यों से कानूनी चुनौतियां मिल सकती हैं।
 - It may set a precedent for further central control over higher education.
 - यह उच्च शिक्षा पर आगे के केंद्रीय नियंत्रण के लिए एक मिसाल कायम कर सकता है।
 - Universities may resist compliance, leading to administrative delays.
 - विश्वविद्यालय अनुपालन का विरोध कर सकते हैं, जिससे प्रशासनिक देरी हो सकती है।
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- Recommendations / सिफारिशें
 - UGC should focus on maintaining academic standards, not administrative appointments.
 - यजीसी को शैक्षणिक मानकों को बनाए रखने पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना चाहिए, न कि प्रशासनिक नियुक्तियों पर।
 - A consultative approach with states can avoid conflicts.
 - राज्यों के साथ परामर्शी दृष्टिकोण टकराव से बच सकता है।
 - State governments should strengthen their university governance frameworks.
 - राज्य सरकारों को अपने विश्वविद्यालय प्रशासन ढांचे को मजबूत करना चाहिए।
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We need distinguished jurists as judges

A critical aspect of a judicial system is the effective and timely delivery of justice. This can be achieved in the Indian judicial system only if the significant crisis of backlogs and vacancies is addressed urgently by both the judiciary and the government.

Data as of January 1, 2025, show that 371 posts of the 1,122 posts sanctioned across the High Courts of the country remain vacant. The Allahabad High Court functions at only 50% of its total sanctioned strength. Naturally, this has a direct impact on the already alarming levels of backlog. As millions of people have to wait for a long time for justice, their faith in the judicial system is eroding. Although this has been a perennial issue, there are now about 60 lakh cases pending across all the High Courts, an astonishing number. To solve this, we need both immediate remedial steps and reformist measures.

While it is true that the pace of Collegium recommendations and the resulting appointments has picked up in the last couple of years, it has unfortunately not been able to match the number of retirements and ever-increasing number of filings. In turn, this has put enormous strain on the system, compelling judges to take on a higher caseload than feasible. This is likely to adversely impact both the time given to cases as well as the depth of engagement with a particular case. Therefore, a well-staffed judiciary functioning at near-total sanctioned strength is the need of the hour.

A game changer in that context, Article 124(3)(c) and Article 217(2)(c), now repealed, of the Constitution became increasingly significant. These provisions allow for the appointment of individuals who, in the opinion of the President (read Collegium), are "distinguished jurists" as judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts. Unfortunately, Article



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serving as a
Law Clerk in the
Supreme Court of
India

124(3)(c) remains unutilised and Article 217(2)(c) has been repealed without any stated reason. In other words, no jurist has been found to be distinguished enough to be appointed to these posts till date. Although it is a routine practice in jurisdictions across the globe to appoint jurists as judges, appointments to the High Courts and the Supreme Court in India have always been either from the Bar (practising advocates) or the judicial services.

At a time when the issue of vacancies and backlogs is stifling the system, introducing and invoking the provision to appoint distinguished jurists to High Courts of the country can turn out to be a game changer. In fact, a similar idea was floated by Shri Shibban Lal Saxena but negated by the Constituent Assembly on June 7, 1949, without any meaningful deliberation.

Involving the world of academia directly into the mainstream Indian judicial system can bring both immense benefits and challenges. A vast pool of specialised knowledge, research-based critical thinking, and expertise can provide unique insights and add a hitherto missing dimension to the judiciary's understanding of complex socioeconomic and socio-legal cases. At the same time, the lack of courtroom experience, procedural knowledge, understanding of limits to exercising judicial power, and a certain degree of resistance to a well-staffed judiciary functioning at near-total sanctioned strength within the institution are challenges that will need to be overcome as well.

An important message to a number of countries such as the United States, Poland, Myanmar, Kenya, Thailand, Spain and Italy is that allow jurists or professors of law to be appointed to posts equivalent to that of a judge in the High Courts and/or the Supreme Court of India have greatly benefited from this practice in India, where academia has expressed its legitimate concerns

and grievances of not having been adequately nurtured or supported, re-introducing Article 217(2)(c) and appointing jurists or academics as judges of the High Courts would send across an important message. At the same time, with adequate training of procedural knowledge and courtroom experience, the presence of our sharpest academic minds on the Bench would ensure that the judicial discourse is enriched and that judicial decision-making is further strengthened.

Granting an opportunity to distinguished academics to effectively engage with the complex problems of the contemporary legal world would lend a fresh perspective to the cause of justice. Such appointments would naturally serve as a bridge between academia and practice. This would lead to a synergistic interaction of legal research with the more nuanced and practical aspects of delivering justice.

Therefore, the need of the hour is to tide over the current crisis of increasing backlogs, and bridge the widening gap between the actual strength and the sanctioned strength of courts. First, the government must comply with the Collegium's recommendations within a strict time frame. Second, deploying innovative solutions, such as re-introducing and invoking Article 217(2)(c) to appoint distinguished jurists to High Courts, would help fill existing vacancies. Tapping into the academic world as a valuable resource sector would help ensure that the Indian judiciary remains dynamic, robust, and diverse, grounded in practical realities as well as an in-depth understanding of its underlying constitutional principles. By drawing upon the expertise of our sharpest academic minds, India will be able to address the steadily growing concerns and enhance the quality of the judiciary's output. Such a step could prove to be transformative for the Indian judiciary in the years to come.

A pushback against online abuse

An actor's decision to legally take on harassers on social media is laudable

STATE OF PLAY

S.R. Praveen
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In Kerala, trolls and abusers may fall silent, at least for the time being, thanks to a recent incident involving a courageous actor in the Malayalam film.

On January 6, the actor lodged a police complaint against 30 people for allegedly posting derogatory remarks beneath one of her posts on social media. The next day, she filed a complaint against businessman Bobby Chemmanur, calling him the "leader" of "social media hoodlums".

The actor alleged that he had harassed her with sexual remarks on social media but also off it, during the inaugural function of one of his jewellery stores. After she objected to the remarks and refused to attend the inauguration of either outlets of the Chemmanur Group, she received obscene comments from several accounts. It seemed to her like a targeted attack.

The police pressed non-bailable charges against Mr. Chemmanur and arrested him from his tea estate in Wayanad within two days of the actor filing the complaint. The arrest was dramatic. A group of young men claiming to be Mr. Chemmanur's fans attempted to stop the police, alleging that the businessman was being unfairly targeted, and a local court denied his bail application and sent him to judicial custody for 14 days. Drawing upon the expertise of our sharpest academic minds, India will be able to address the steadily growing concerns and enhance the quality of the judiciary's output. Such a step could prove to be transformative for the Indian judiciary in the years to come.

As the probe gathered pace, many of the offensive comments under the complainant's older posts, thank

some cases the profiles used to post such comments on her profile, began to disappear. While the Kerala High Court granted bail to Mr. Chemmanur, it made him apologise for his theatrics which involved a reported refusal to sign the bail bond.

The actor's decision to legally take on harassers on social media is laudable. Over the last few years, there has been a growing number of instances of targeted online harassment against women in various fields, especially politicians, journalists, and celebrities. While the worst attacks are invariably launched against opinionated women, sometimes all it takes is the posting of a photograph to attract abuse.

The complainant wrote that cruel comments, sexual innuendos, and a planned campaign by certain social media profiles are enough to take lives these days. Many people, including celebrities facing serious legal, religious and business groups, and political parties seeking to silence those raising uncomfortable questions, have weaponised online armies to push specific actors into submission. They are known to deploy hundreds and thousands of fake accounts to intimidate their targets and even drive them off social media.

Activist Rahul Easwar, who habitually defends on news

channels men facing serious allegations of sexual harassment and assault, waded into the issue by questioning the actor's sartorial choices. Accusing him of orchestrating a cybercrime against her to manipulate public opinion and trivialise her complaint, the Malayalam actor then filed a complaint against Mr. Easwar. She argued that his comments would prevent more women in similar situations from lodging complaints.

The high-profile arrest sent out the important message that online bullying will not be tolerated. The swift action taken by the police and the fear that it has possibly created could act as a strong deterrent against online harassment in the future. Women face a particularly violent and sexualised form of abuse online, so sometimes even in the form of rape and death threats, which is why the actor's firm stand has been lauded.

However, some people argue that the actor's decision to file a complaint is an attack on the freedom of expression. This is a willful and wrongful contradiction. The freedom of speech does not translate into a freedom from the consequences of such speech. Freedoms come with responsibilities. It is possible to cause great harm to people without taking lives these days. Many people, including celebrities facing serious legal, religious and business groups, and political parties seeking to silence those raising uncomfortable questions, have weaponised online armies to push specific actors into submission. They are known to deploy hundreds and thousands of fake accounts to intimidate their targets and even drive them off social media.

Activist Rahul Easwar, who habitually defends on news

One in three Indians wants to buy an electric vehicle next: report

Women influence 52% of the decisions related to the purchase of EVs in Indian households

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

One in three consumers in India is eyeing electric vehicles (EVs) as their next purchase, says the "Think Mobility" report by Google and BCG. Women are emerging as key decision-makers in the EV market. While EV-related challenges persist, innovations and localised manufacturing could pave the way for greater adoption, says the report.

The report highlights significant growth potential in India's automotive market. Chart 1 shows that the vehicular market has the highest potential for growth in developing countries such as India. On the other hand, countries such as the U.S., Switzerland, and Denmark, which already have a high vehicle penetration rate, have limited room for further growth.

Chart 2 shows that 36% of consumers are considering an EV for their next four-wheeler, while 30% are inclined towards an electric two-wheeler.

When read together, Charts 1 and 2 show that not only is there significant growth potential in India's automotive market as only a small share of the population (3.3%) owns cars, but a substantial portion of this growth is likely to be driven by consumers who are increasingly inclined towards EVs. The study also estimates a 2.7-fold increase in elite households by 2025. This suggests that the affordability of higher-priced EVs is unlikely to deter a substantial share of households.

Improving the availability and discoverability of charging infrastructure, offering innovative financing options, scaling up localised manufacturing, extending warranties, ensuring transparency in battery health, and introducing new models - 60% of which are being developed by major Indian original equipment manufacturers - are new to the market.

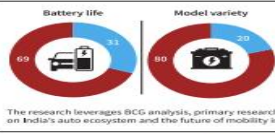
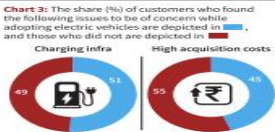
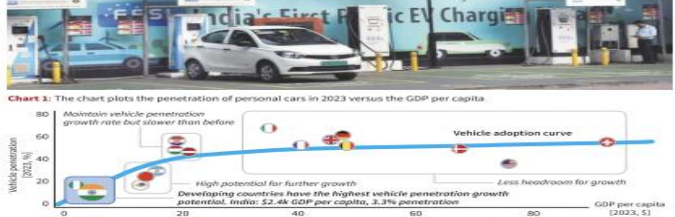
Women influence 52% of EV purchase decisions, while they influence only 38% of non-EV purchase decisions in India. The report says that over 41% of Indian customers with two-wheeler preferences vehicles with in-built navigation systems on the dashboard. It also says that 85% of Indian users are open to considering the car model they rented as their next purchase.

Notably, Gen Z is 2.7 times more likely to use self-drive rentals compared to the older generations. One in four consumers who are buying a car for the first time are planning to purchase a pre-owned vehicle. To convert these intentions into actual sales, factors such as digitalisation, transparency, and trust are essential. Additionally, owners cars to upgrade their lifestyle. High-income, status-driven consumers are drawn towards luxury second-hand cars for their uniqueness, while those who take frequent road trips prefer pre-owned vehicles for their durability (Chart 4).

Sellers are 1.5 times more likely to prefer organised channels when selling their cars. These platforms act as one-stop shops, offering streamlined processes, improved valuations, and hassle-free ownership transfers. However, while pre-existing platforms are popular, buyers are less inclined towards organised systems, rigid payment structures, and a lower level of trust compared to familiar in-network sources.

Steering towards a greener future

The data were sourced from "Think Mobility," a research report published by BCG & Google



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 21, 1975

Tibet badly hit by quake: 36 die in H.P.

Simla, Jan. 20: A heavy toll of lives and extensive damage to property in Tibet have been caused by yesterday's earthquake which killed 36 persons in Himachal Pradesh. Reports coming in from across the Indo-Tibetan border said there was "tremendous" damage to life and property in Tibet. Eye-witnesses on the Indian side of the border said they saw Tibetan homes being blown away with a deafening roar in a heap of debris. Officials in Delhi put the toll in Himachal Pradesh at 36 and said roads had been blocked in the Kinnaur area and several buildings laid waste. A massive relief operation was launched today and helicopters have been inducted for the task.

An official spokesman in Simla reported extensive damage to property and said district authorities were scanning the affected areas to assess the damage. According to unofficial sources, several personnel of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and Army have also been killed in the quake. Several banks' collapses.

The affected areas have a widely dispersed population. According to information received in Delhi by the Himachal Pradesh authorities, 10 persons died in Salkhar village, 10 in village of Chango and three each in villages Chango and Sumdhog. Eight labourers of the office of the Director-General of the Border Roads Organisation and a bus driver were also among the dead.

Among the dead in Leo village were nine boys and a girl. They were killed when a monastery in Leo village collapsed.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 21, 1925

Railway electrification in South Africa

The connection with the scheme for the electrification of the South African Railways, the contract for the equipment of 83 motor coaches each complete with four 185 B.H.P. electric motors, and the equipment for 133 motor coaches for the Cape Town to Simons Town section of the South African Railways has been placed with the English Electric Company Ltd., London.

One in three Indians wants to buy an electric vehicle next: report

Women influence 52% of the decisions related to the purchase of EVs in Indian households

Steering towards a greener future

The data were sourced from 'Think Mobility', a research report published by BCG & Google



Chart 1: The chart plots the penetration of personal cars in 2023 versus the GDP per capita

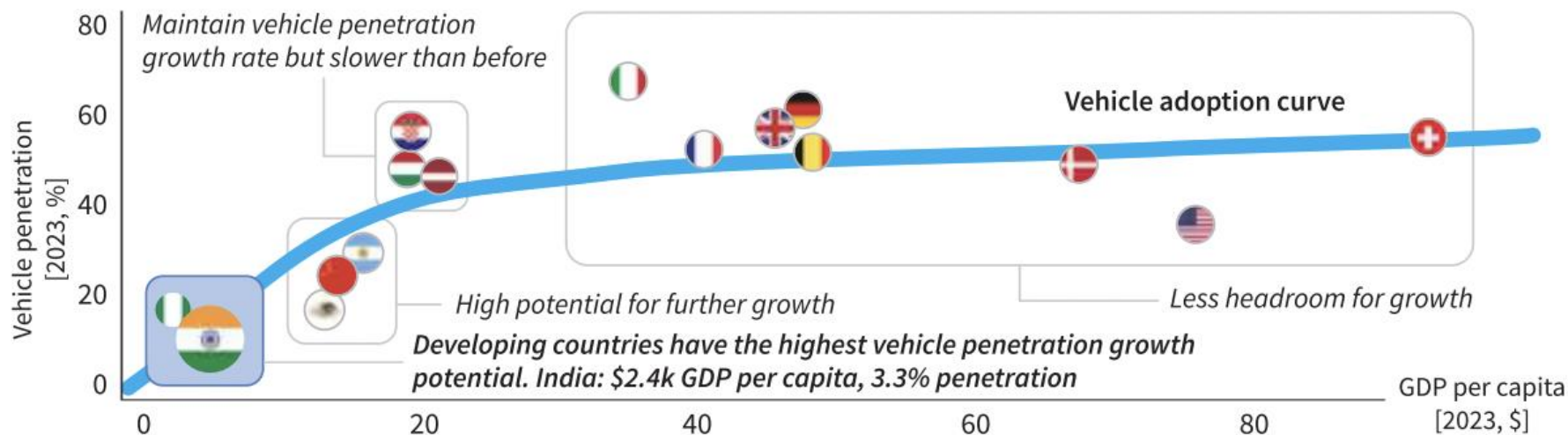


Chart 3: The share (%) of customers who found the following issues to be of concern while adopting electric vehicles are depicted in ■, and those who did not are depicted in ■

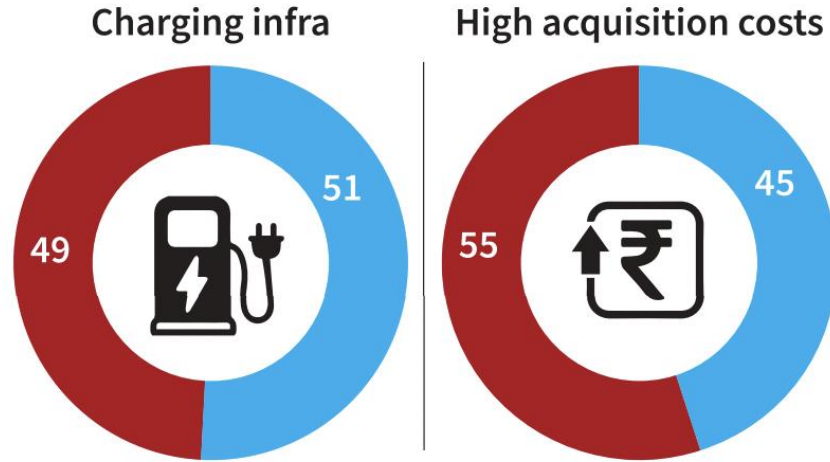
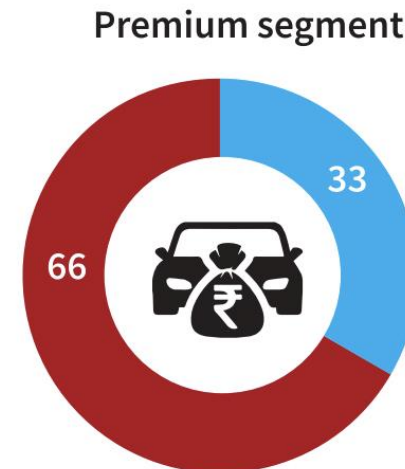
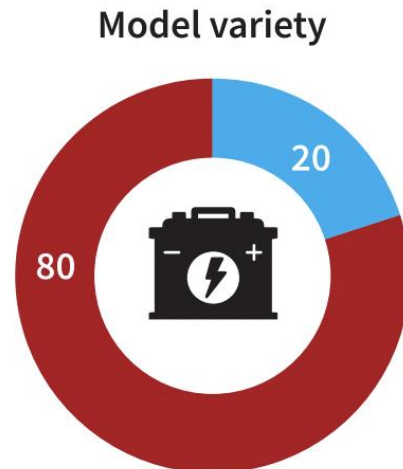
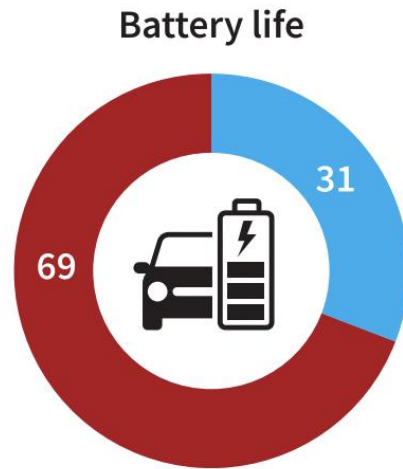
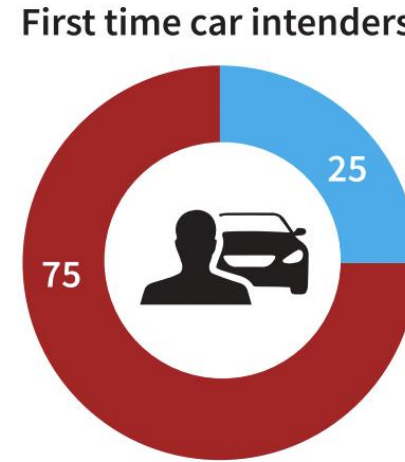


Chart 4: Share (%) of consumers in various segments planning to purchase a pre-owned vehicle ■, and those who are not ■



The research leverages BCG analysis, primary research and industry sources to shed light on India's auto ecosystem and the future of mobility in India



Atiqa Mir to participate in WSK Championships 2025

Indian karter Atiqa Mir will participate in the World Series Karting (WSK) Championships 2025, driving for the 29-time WSK Champion Team Babyrace. The 10-year-old Atiqa is the first Indian female to drive in the WSK and will also be the only female in the Mini class on the entire grid of over 60 karts. She will race in all three WSK Championships this year; the WSK Super Master Series, the WSK Euro Series and the WSK Final Cup.

Singapore signs Anup Sridhar as additional singles coach

India's Asian Championships bronze-winning former shunter Anup Sridhar has been roped in as a singles coach by the Singapore Badminton Association (SBA). However, South Korean Kim Ji-hyun will continue to be the head coach for SBA's men's and women's teams.

Sepp Straka wins US PGA American Express

Austrian Sepp Straka conquered his nerves to capture his third US PGA Tour title in convincing style in Los Angeles on Sunday, firing a two-under-par 70 to win the American Express by two strokes. Straka started the day with a four-shot lead over a trio of players and led by the same margin after his fourth hole of the day at the par-three 13th — the toughest hole on the Stadium Course. But it wouldn't be a smooth march to the finish. Straka's lead dwindled to three strokes after his first bogey of the week at the par-five 16th, where his second shot from the fairway drifted right and his 15-foot putt to save par slipped past the hole. He would bogey the 18th as well, but his 25-under-par total put him two clear of former world No. 1 Justin Thomas, who carded a six-under-par 66 for 265. Another former world No. 1, Australian Jason Day, dropped out of a tie with Thomas with a bogey at 18.



WADA says won't appeal in Swiatek doping case

The World Anti-Doping Agency said Monday it will not appeal in the case of Iga Swiatek, who last year accepted a one-month ban after testing positive for a banned substance. WADA said it made the decision after a thorough review found that the "contaminated melatonin scenario, as presented by the athlete and accepted by the ITIA, is plausible." WADA has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in the case of Janmik Sinner and is seeking to ban the man's number one for up to two years.

Hamilton realises his dream of racing for Ferrari in Formula One

Reuters
MARBANELLO

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton, Formula One's most successful driver of all time, arrived for his first day at Ferrari on Monday. Hamilton said it was a dream come true to race for the Italian team.

Almost a year since Hamilton announced his shock decision to leave Mercedes — where the won six of his seven Formula One world championships — for Ferrari, the 40-year-old is one of the team's head-quarters at Maranello for his first official day. "I've been lucky enough to have achieved things in my career I never thought possible, but part of me has always held on to that dream of racing in red. I



New beginning: Hamilton arrived for his first day at Ferrari on Monday. GETTY IMAGES

couldn't be happier to realise this dream," he wrote on Instagram. "I've been lucky enough to have achieved things in my career I never thought possible, but part of me has always held on to that dream of racing in red. I

Man. City hits Ipswich for a six

Foden scintillates with a brace, Kovacic, Doku, Haaland, and McAlister also find the net as defending champion moves to fourth, ahead of Newcastle



Hitters: Foden nets his second and City's third goal during the rout of Ipswich on Sunday. REUTERS

EURO LEAGUES

Reuters
IPSWICH

Manchester City's Phil Foden scored twice and created another goal in an outstanding first-half display as it hammered Ipswich Town 6-0 on Sunday to roar back into the Premier League's top four. The win moved City to 38 points and into fourth position on goal difference ahead of Newcastle United, but they are still 12 points behind leaders Liverpool, who have a game in hand, and six behind Arsenal and Nottingham Forest.

Ipswich, which remains 18th on 16 points, had a couple of good early chances but City shook off the shackles of recent poor performances with a superb display of attacking football, and once they got the first goal, there was no way back for their hosts.

It came in the 27th minute as Jeremy Doku combined with Kevin De Bruyne, and he in turn worked the ball on for Foden to take a touch before drilling it home to break the deadlock.

That trio tormented the Ipswich defence as Mateo

Kovacic doubled the lead three minutes later. Doku was again involved down the left, feeding the ball for Foden to set up Kovacic, who fired into the net from the edge of the box.

The result: Premier League: Ipswich 0 lost to Manchester City 6 (Foden 2-4, Kovacic 30, Doku 49, Haaland 57, McAlister 69). Series A: Ipswich 0 (Barnes 55, Dunfield 79, Thuram 89) lost to Lazio 3 (Gigot 2, Dia 21, Zaccagnini 56).

La Liga: Osasuna 1 (Garcia 59) drew with Rayo Vallecano 1 (Canelito 10), Valencia 1 (Duro 26) lost to Real Sociedad 0. Bundesliga: Werder Bremen 0 lost to Augsburg 2 (Essende 5, 45-1).

Ankita to lead Indian charge at KPBT Women's Open

Reuters
SURAT

back in 2011. Owner of 17 ITF singles titles, Marino lost in the first round of the opening Slam.

Fruhvirtova, 17, had won this event two years ago. Reigning champion Semenovitsa is coming off a semifinal appearance in New Delhi last week. "I'm happy to be back here. I have great memories from last year," she said.

Ankita Raina, the World No. 286, will lead the Indian charge. Ankita and three other Indians — Sabha Yamalapati, Shirwali Rashmikha Bhamidipati and Vaidehee Chaudhari — were handed wild cards.

India's Karman Kaur Thandi, who is on a comeback trail, lost in the first qualifying round to Russian Amina Anshba 4-6, 6-3, 6-2.

While official testing starts in Bahrain on Feb. 26-28, The Briton had his worst season in Formula One last year, in terms of championship position, finishing seventh overall but did win two races after two seasons without a victory. Hamilton's last championship win came in 2020. Hamilton will partner Charles Leclerc at Ferrari, which is without a driver's title since 2007, taking the place of Spaniard Carlos Sainz, who has joined Williams, and the 2025 season begins with the Australian GP from March 14-16. "Today we start a new era in the history of this iconic team, and I can't wait to see what story we will write together," Hamilton added.

India set to host FIDE World Cup 2025

Mayank Chaudhary
CHENNAI

India is set to host the FIDE World Cup 2025, marking the country's first major international chess tournament since the 2022 Chennai Chess Olympiad. FIDE, the international chess governing body, initially listed India as the host in its 2025 calendar for the tournament scheduled from October 31 to November 27. However, the listing was

briefly retracted and replaced with "to be announced" on Monday. Despite this, sources in All India Chess Federation (AICF) have confirmed to *The Hindu* that the hosting rights have been finalised. "India will host the FIDE World Cup 2025, and we will soon announce it officially with the final dates," said a senior AICF official. The FIDE World Cup, a prestigious knockout tournament featuring over 200

players, also serves as a pathway to the Candidates Tournament, with three qualification spots up for grabs. India's R. Praggnanandhaa made history in the 2023 edition, clinching the silver after losing to Magnus Carlsen in the final. Viswanathan Anand remains the only Indian to have won the World Cup, achieving back-to-back titles in 2000 and 2002 when the format included a round-robin stage.

Satwik-Chirag will look to go the distance; Sindhu has her task cut out

Reuters
JAKARTTA (INDONESIA)

Star Indian men's doubles pair of Satwik Siddhu and Chirag Shetty will be eyeing its maiden title of the year while Lakshya Sen will look to put behind a disappointing start to the season when the Indonesia Masters Super 500 tournament gets underway here on Tuesday.

The world No 9 duo of Satwik and Chirag has been in a fine form, reach-

ing semifinals of the last two tournaments — Malaysia Open Super 1000 and India Open Super 750 — over the last as many weeks and will be keen to cross the final hurdle.

Satwik-Chirag had lost each of the two semifinals in straight sets and their aim would be to go the distance in the upcoming tournament. They will open their campaign with a round of 32 clash against Chinese Taipei's Chen Zhi-Ray and Yu Chieh Lin. The challenge, however, would be greater for India's singles players Lakshya and P.V. Sindhu. Lakshya will be determined to put his best foot forward in the round of 32 clash.

Two other Indians will face off in the men's singles qualification round as Kidambi Srikanth, who did not feature in India Open, will look to get the better of Kiran George.

In women's singles round of 32, Sindhu will open her campaign against Chinese Taipei's Sung Shuo Yun, Akarshi Kashyap will face Japan's Nozomi Okuhara and Anupama Upadhyaya will take on Gregoria Mariska Tunjung.

Senhora saves Maharashtra's blushes, helps reach the last-eight stage

Reuters
SURAT

Trisha Gogoi gave Assam the best chance, overcom- ing both her fancied opponents in a nail-biting clash. But Senhora D'Souza saved Maharashtra — last year's women medalist — the agony of a round-of-16 exit by clinching the decisive game of the deciding tie despite having her back to the wall.

As a result, riding on Senhora's comeback win, Maharashtra edged past Assam 3-2 to set up a quarter-final clash against Haryana in the women's team championship of the 60th Senior National Championship at the Pandit Dinkar Upadhyay Stadium here on Monday.

When Trisha stunned an in-form Tanisha Koticha in the semifinals, Senhora the strongest players to level the tie at two matches apiece and enforce the



Smashing times: Senhora played a pivotal role for Maharashtra. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

kar heaved a sigh of relief.

Pre-quarterfinals: Women: Maharashtra beat Assam 3-2 (Tanisha Koticha beat Bhavana Kashyap 11-4, 11-7, 11-5; Senhora D'Souza lost to Trisha Gogi 9-11, 11-4, 11-4, 9-11, 10-12; Samriddha Bhambhani beat Garg Saini 11-5, 11-3, 11-6; Tanisha lost to Trisha 11-5, 7-11, 10-12, 11-8, 3-11; Senhora beat Bhavana 11-7, 7-11, 11-5, 2-11, 12-10; PSPB beat Telangana 3-1; West Bengal beat Kerala 0; Haryana beat Andhra Pradesh 3-0; Maharashtra beat Assam 3-2; Tamil Nadu beat Chandigarh 3-0; Gujarat beat Odisha 3-0; Delhi beat Karnataka 3-0; PSPB beat Uttar Pradesh 3-0.

Men: Tamil Nadu beat Bengal 3-2 (S. Praveen Raj beat Sourav 14-16, 12-10, 8-11, 11-9, 11-8; P.B. Abhinav beat Punit Bansal 11-8, 11-5, 11-13, 11-5, 8; Kirthikyan lost to Shrawadip Das 9-11, 10-12, 11-13; Abhinav beat Sourav 9-11, 11-9, 9-11, 4-12, 10-12; PSPB beat Karnataka 3-0; Telangana beat Assam 3-0; Delhi beat Uttar Pradesh 3-0; Maharashtra beat Uttarhand 3-0; PSPB beat Punjab 3-1.

Champions League returns with a high-stake clash between PSG and Man. City

Reuters
GENOVA

struggled. Real Madrid has lost half its games in 20th place despite adding Kylian Mbappe to its mid-winning team, and lowest-ranked debutant Brest has cruised to a 5-0 victory, possible just ahead of Lille. The top eight in the standings on January 20 advance directly to the quarter-finals. Manchester City, West Ham and Arsenal will likely include current leader Liverpool and second-placed Barcelona which are the only teams to have yet started to finish in the top 24. Liverpool is the only team to win all six games. Teams placed from ninth to 24th go into the new knockout play-off round. Nos. 9-16 will be

Nigeria shocks New Zealand

Reuters
DUBLIN

Debutant Nigeria stunned a formidable New Zealand by two runs for a historic win in a rain-interrupted low-scoring thriller in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in which both sides were restricted to four wickets and 100 runs. The score: Group-B: Ireland 75 in 17.4 overs (Iainnaghela 27), New Zealand 63 in 19.4 overs (Singh 2/8, Chetna Prasad 2/12) lost to USA 79/0 in 9.4 overs (Dina 2/6, Chetna 2/6). Group-C: Nigeria 65/0 in 13 overs (Lucy 2/6, Elanor 1/6), New Zealand 63/0 in 13 overs (Lucy 2/6, Elanor 1/6). Group-D: Bangladesh 11/9 in 20 overs (Afia Akhina 2/6, Calmeha 2/6), New Zealand 22/0 in 20 overs (Afia Akhina 2/6, Calmeha 2/6), Australia 52/9 in 19.2 overs (Lucy 2/6, Elanor 1/6). Group-E: Australia 52/9 in 19.2 overs (Lucy 2/6, Elanor 1/6). Group-F: Australia 52/9 in 19.2 overs (Lucy 2/6, Elanor 1/6).

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Low-income population's trust in govt, businesses lower than rich counterparts

India slips to third on trust scale

WORLD
ECONOMIC
FORUM

DAVOS 2025

BARUN JHA

Davos, January 20

INDIA HAS SLIPPED one place to third slot when it comes to people's trust in the government, businesses, media and NGOs, while the low-income population is far less trusting than their richer counterparts, a study showed here on Monday.

The annual Edelman Trust Barometer, now in its 25th year, released before the start of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, also showed that India ranks low at 13th

TRUST DEFICIT



■ The overall list for trust of the general population in the government, businesses, media and NGOs was again topped by China

place when it comes to trust of people in other countries, in companies with Indian headquarters.

Canada topped this list of foreign-headquartered companies, followed by Japan, Germany, the UK, France and the US, while those ranked higher

■ The Edelman Trust Barometer also showed that India ranks at 13th when it comes to trust of people in other countries in India-headquartered companies



■ The survey of **28** countries saw Japan replacing the UK at the bottom



■ The survey also flagged a global unprecedented lack of faith in institutional leaders

than India also included Mexico, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, China and Brazil.

The overall list for trust of the general population in the government, businesses, media and NGOs was again topped by China, while Indonesia replaced India for

the second spot by virtue of an increased score despite the Indian score remaining unchanged. The survey of 28 countries saw Japan replacing the UK at the bottom.

»INSIDE«

BILLIONAIRE WEALTH SOARS 3X FASTER IN 2024 TO \$15 TRN

PAGE 13

In most countries, including India, the low income population was far less trusting than the high income

group. Within the high income group, India was ranked fourth after Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and China, while the low income population made India the third most trusted nation after China and Indonesia.

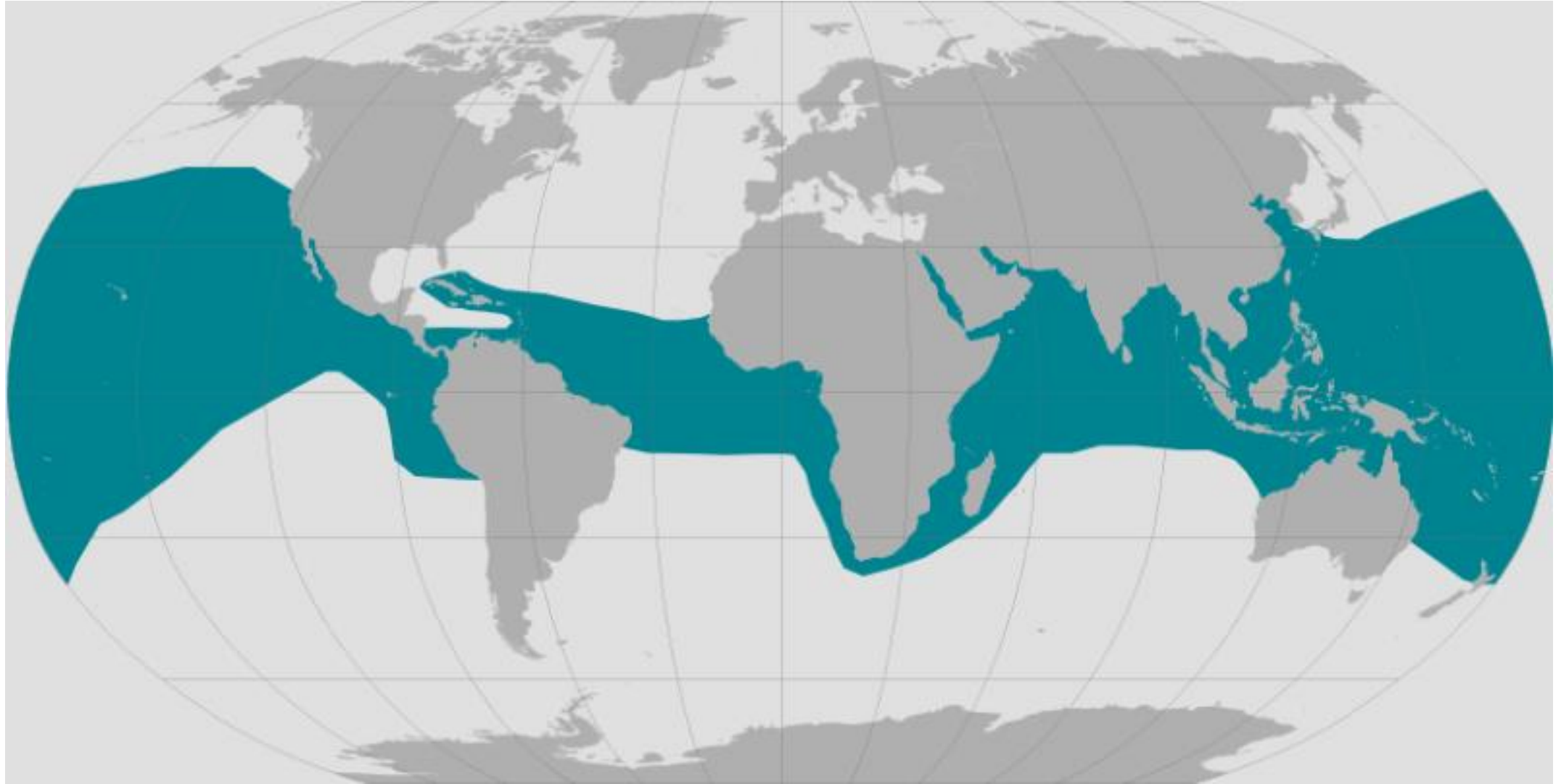
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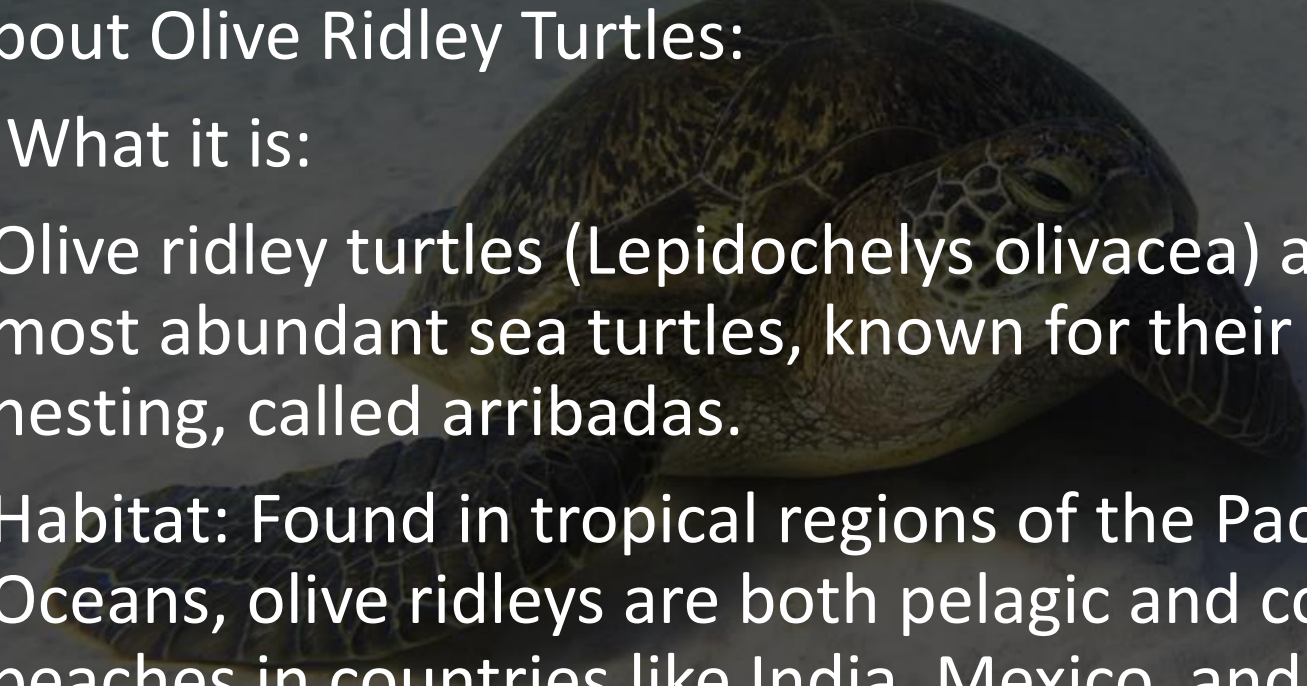


Olive Ridley Turtles

- Over the past two weeks, numerous dead olive ridley turtles have washed ashore in Tamil Nadu, particularly in Chennai.





- 
- An Olive Ridley Turtle is shown resting on a sandy beach. The turtle's shell is dark with a patterned texture, and its head is turned towards the right. The background is a soft-focus view of the ocean waves breaking on the shore.
- About Olive Ridley Turtles:
 - What it is:
 - Olive ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) are one of the smallest and most abundant sea turtles, known for their synchronized mass nesting, called arribadas.
 - Habitat: Found in tropical regions of the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans, olive ridleys are both pelagic and coastal, frequenting nesting beaches in countries like India, Mexico, and Costa Rica.



- Features:

- Named for their **olive-green, heart-shaped shell**.
- Omnivorous, feeding on crabs, jellyfish, and algae.
- Capable of diving up to **500 feet** to forage on the ocean floor.
- Mating Season: Their nesting season varies by region. In India, it spans **November to March**, with mass nesting observed at beaches like Odisha's **Gahirmatha and Rushikulya**.

- **Protection Status:**
- **Schedule 1** of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
- **Appendix I** of CITES
- **Recent Causes of Death:**
 - **Bycatch in Fishing Nets:** Olive ridley turtles get trapped in commercial trawler nets, suffocate due to lack of air, and die during their breeding season.
 - **Entanglement and Collisions:** Discarded fishing gear and marine debris, along with vessel collisions near nesting grounds, cause severe injuries and fatalities.
 - **Environmental and Overfishing Impact:** Overfishing near turtle congregation areas attracts more trawlers, increasing accidental deaths and habitat disturbances.

The background is a vibrant blue digital landscape. On the left, a portion of a globe is visible, showing continents and oceans. The right side features a bright light source, possibly a sun or moon, creating a lens flare effect. The foreground is dominated by a grid of binary code (0s and 1s) that recedes into the distance, creating a sense of depth. Overlaid on this grid are several glowing, curved lines that suggest data flow or network connections. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and high-tech.

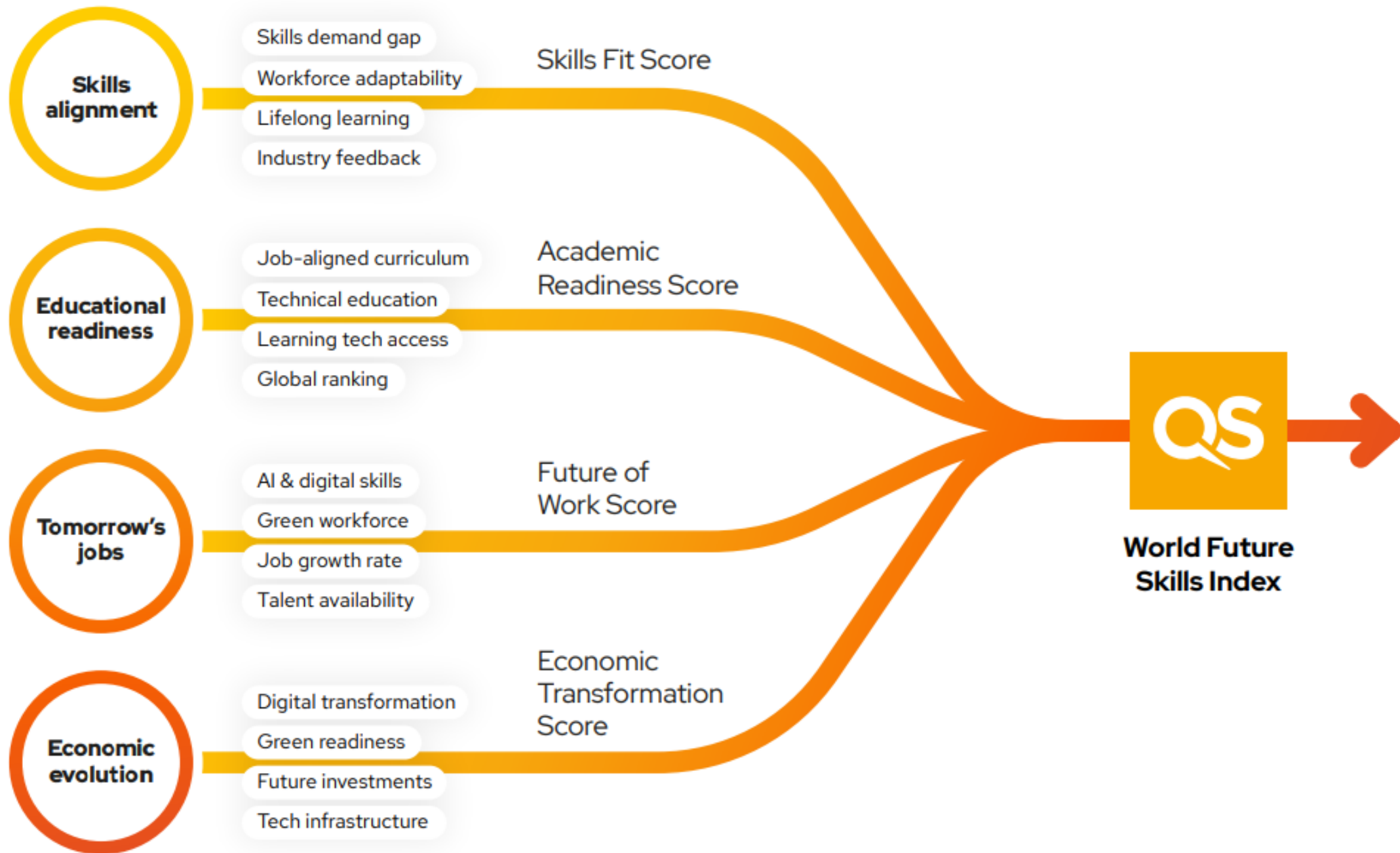
QS World Future Skills Index 2025

- India ranks **25th** in the **QS World Future Skills Index 2025**, positioning it as a "**future skills contender**." The index evaluates how well countries are prepared to meet the evolving demands of the global job market
-



What is the QS World Future Skills Index? About: The QS World Future Skills Index, developed by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), ranks countries on their readiness to meet evolving global job market demands emphasizing innovation, sustainability, and talent development.
Indicators:

The Index uses four indicators to measure a country's preparedness to thrive in an increasingly skills-driven global economy.

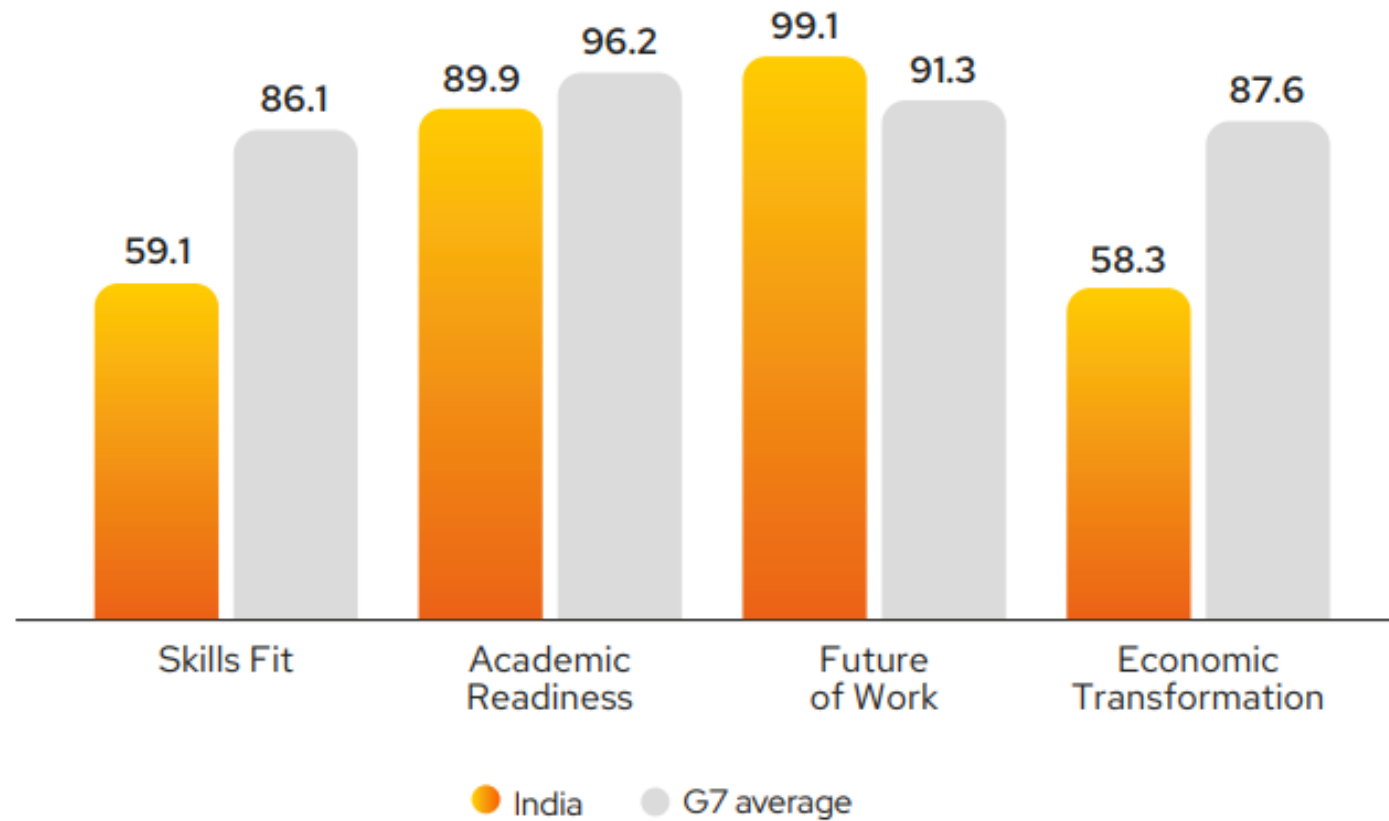


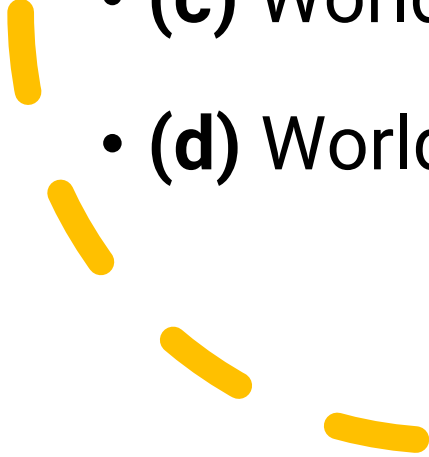
Skills Fit: India ranks 37th, the lowest among the top 30 countries. This highlights significant **gaps between the workforce's skills and employer demands**, reflecting challenges within India's higher education system in adapting to the evolving needs of the job market.

Economic Transformation: India ranked 40th, highlighting the challenges in innovation and aligning economic strategies with workforce adaptability.

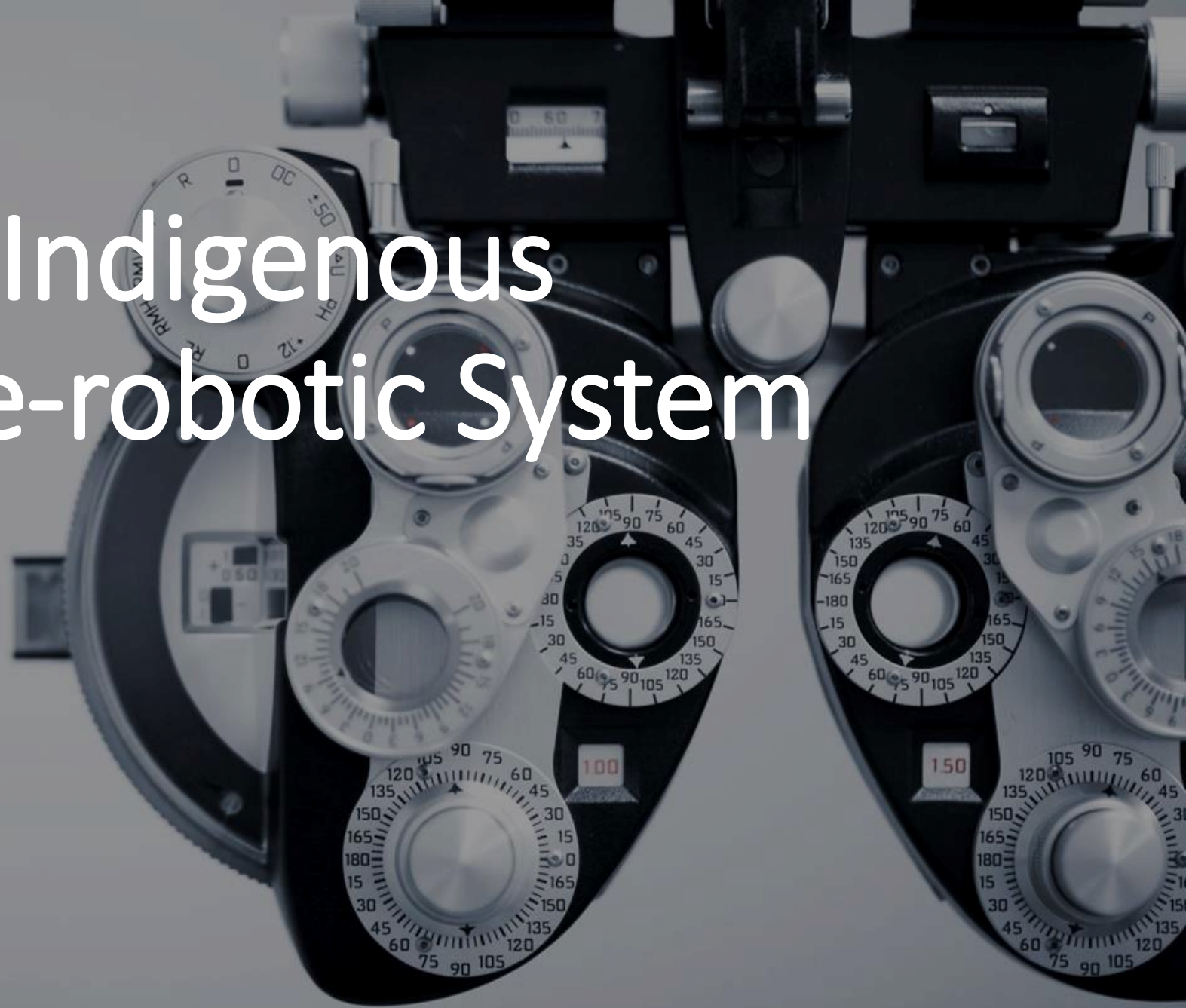
Overall score: **76.6/100**



QS World Future Skills Index
India performance vs G7 average



- 
- **The Global Competitiveness Report is published by the (2019)**
 - **(a)** International Monetary Fund
 - **(b)** United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
 - **(c)** World Economic Forum
 - **(d)** World Bank
- 

India's First Indigenous Surgical Tele-robotic System



- 
- India's first indigenous surgical tele-robotic system, **SSI Mantra**, was used to perform two **complex heart surgeries remotely**, with the surgeon in Gurugram and the patient in Jaipur.
- 



A gloved hand is shown interacting with a robotic system in a laboratory setting. The hand is positioned over a tray containing several small vials with blue caps. The background is slightly blurred, showing the white structure of the robotic system. The overall scene is dimly lit, with a focus on the hand and the vials.

- **About SSI Mantra**


- SSI Mantra is a robotic system that performs **complex surgical procedures in Genito-Uro-Oncology cases.**

- It is developed by **SSI Ltd** and it is the only robotic system worldwide to receive **regulatory approval for telesurgery and tele-proctoring.**

-
- **Benefits:** Reduced operation time, better precision, minimal trauma, lower blood loss, faster recovery, and reduced infection risk.
 - The technology aims to bridge geographical gaps in surgical care, making tele-surgery accessible globally.
 - **Challenges to Wider Adoption:** High costs of robotic surgeries, which are currently more available in metro and tier-1 cities.
 - Other Challenges included latency time, requiring good connectivity, and addressing potential technical problems.

Central Reserve Police Force

SERVICE DOG

- 
- Assam police chief Gyanendra Pratap Singh has been appointed **Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)**.
 - **Central Reserve Police Force**
 - **About:** The CRPF is the premier central police force of the Union of India entrusted with maintaining internal security.

Origin: Established originally as the Crown Representative's Police in 1939, it stands as one of the oldest central paramilitary forces.

- In response to escalating political turmoil and unrest within the princely state of India.

Ministry: Ministry of Home Affairs

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

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

- Who took the oath as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, 2025?
- 20 जनवरी 2025 को अमेरिका के 47वें राष्ट्रपति के रूप में किसने शपथ ली?
- A. Joe Biden / जो बाइडेन
B. Donald Trump / डोनाल्ड ट्रंप
C. Kamala Harris / कमला हैरिस
D. Ron DeSantis / रॉन डेसांटिस

- What name did Trump propose for the Gulf of Mexico?
- ट्रंप ने मैक्सिको की खाड़ी के लिए कौन सा नया नाम प्रस्तावित किया?
- A. Gulf of Texas / टेक्सास की खाड़ी
- B. Gulf of America / अमेरिका की खाड़ी
- C. Gulf of Liberty / लिबर्टी की खाड़ी
- D. Gulf of Freedom / फ्रीडम की खाड़ी

- Which international leader represented India at Trump's inauguration ceremony?
- ट्रंप के शपथ ग्रहण समारोह में भारत का प्रतिनिधित्व किसने किया?
- A. Narendra Modi / नरेंद्र मोदी
- B. S. Jaishankar / एस. जयशंकर
- C. Rajnath Singh / राजनाथ सिंह
- D. Amit Shah / अमित शाह

- What economic policy focus did Trump emphasize in his second term?
- ट्रंप ने अपने दूसरे कार्यकाल में किस आर्थिक नीति पर जोर दिया?
- A. Increasing government spending / सरकारी खर्च बढ़ाना
- B. Strengthening American manufacturing / अमेरिकी विनिर्माण को मजबूत करना
- C. Reducing corporate taxes / कॉर्पोरेट करों को कम करना
- D. Encouraging cryptocurrency adoption / क्रिप्टोक्यूरेंसी को अपनाने को प्रोत्साहित करना

- What was a key reason for Tamil Nadu's opposition to UGC draft regulations?
- तमिलनाडु द्वारा यूजीसी के मसौदा विनियमों का विरोध करने का मुख्य कारण क्या था?
- A. Violation of state autonomy / राज्य स्वायत्तता का उल्लंघन
B. Increase in tuition fees / ट्यूशन फीस में वृद्धि
C. Reduction in faculty recruitment / फैकल्टी भर्ती में कमी
D. Centralization of university admission tests / विश्वविद्यालय प्रवेश परीक्षाओं का केंद्रीकरण

- What does the QS World Future Skills Index 2025 rank India as?
- QS वर्ल्ड फ्यूचर स्किल्स इंडेक्स 2025 में भारत को किस स्थान पर रखा गया है?
- A. Future Skills Leader / फ्यूचर स्किल्स लीडर
- B. Future Skills Contender / फ्यूचर स्किल्स कंटेंडर
- C. Future Skills Emerging Market / फ्यूचर स्किल्स इमर्जिंग मार्केट
- D. Future Skills Innovator / फ्यूचर स्किल्स इनोवेटर

- Which is India's first indigenous surgical tele-robotic system?
- भारत की पहली स्वदेशी सर्जिकल टेली-रोबोटिक प्रणाली कौन सी है?
- A. Sushruta / सुश्रुत
- B. SSI Mantra / एसएसआई मंत्र
- C. MediBot / मेडिबॉट
- D. Robodoc / रोबोडॉक

- Which police force has Gyanendra Pratap Singh been appointed as the Director General of?
- ज्ञानेंद्र प्रताप सिंह को किस पुलिस बल का महानिदेशक नियुक्त किया गया है?
- A. Border Security Force (BSF) / सीमा सुरक्षा बल (बीएसएफ)
B. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) / केंद्रीय रिजर्व पुलिस बल (सीआरपीएफ)
C. Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) / भारत-तिब्बत सीमा पुलिस (आईटीबीपी)
D. National Security Guard (NSG) / राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा गार्ड (एनएसजी)

- What is the significance of Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi?
- श्रीलंका में जया श्री महा बोधि का महत्व क्या है?
- A. Oldest tree planted by humans / मानव द्वारा लगाया गया सबसे पुराना वृक्ष
- B. Tallest banyan tree in the world / दुनिया का सबसे ऊंचा बरगद का पेड़
- C. Site of first Buddhist council / पहले बौद्ध परिषद का स्थल
- D. Largest natural forest in Sri Lanka / श्रीलंका का सबसे बड़ा प्राकृतिक वन

Word of the day

Derisive:

abusing vocally; expressing contempt or ridicule

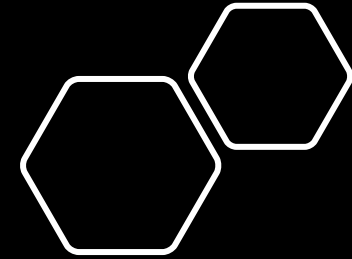
Synonyms: jeering, mocking, taunting

Usage: *His speech drew derisive comments from the crowd.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/derisivepro

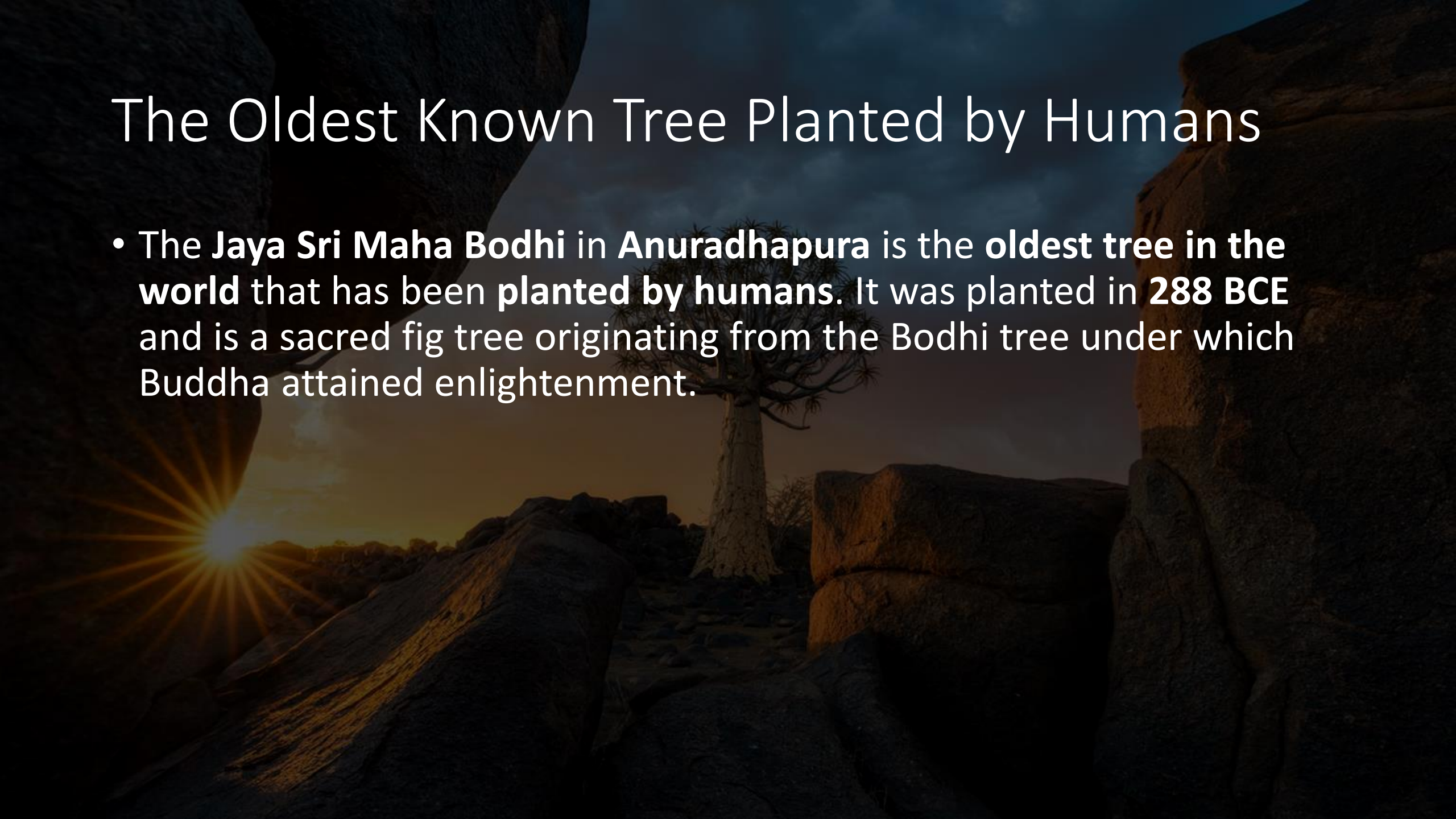
International Phonetic

Alphabet: /dɪˈrɪsɪv/, /dɪˈrɪsɪv/

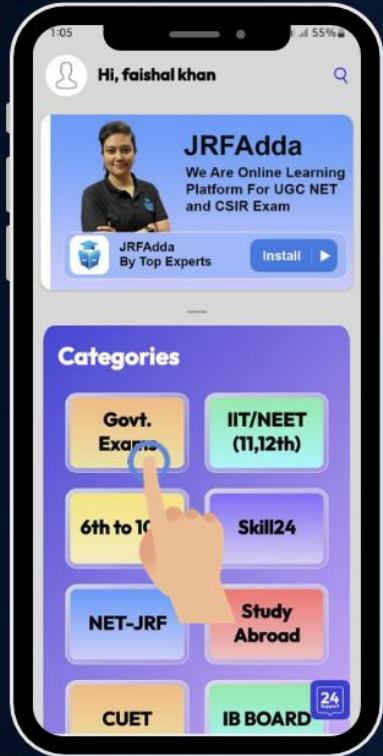


The Oldest Known Tree Planted by Humans

- The **Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi** in **Anuradhapura** is the **oldest tree in the world** that has been **planted by humans**. It was planted in **288 BCE** and is a sacred fig tree originating from the Bodhi tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment.



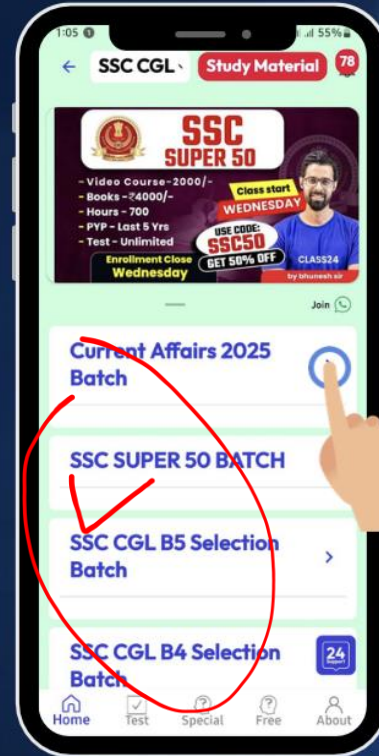
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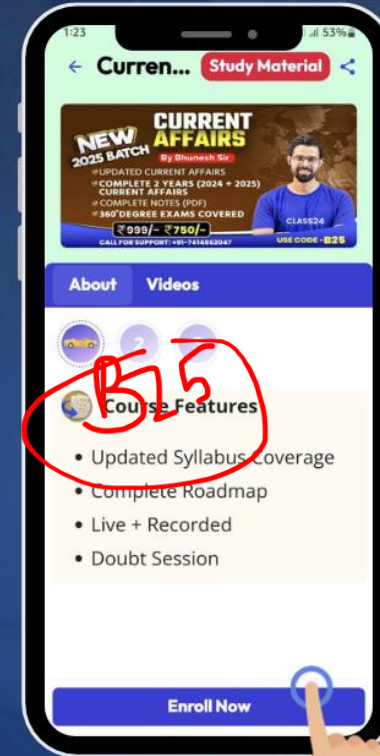
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Step 3



Step 4





Thank you
guys.
