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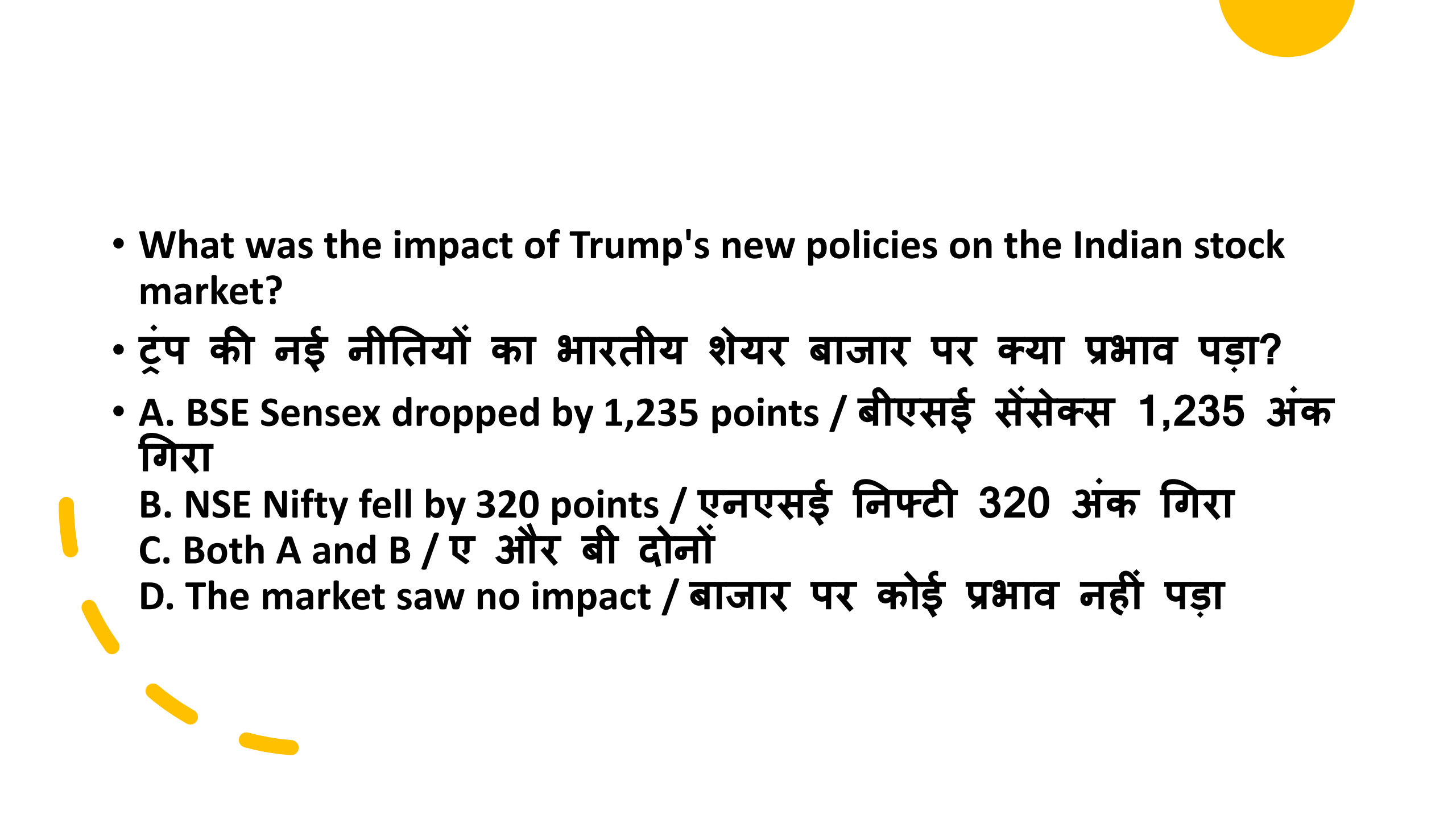
10 MCQ QUIZ


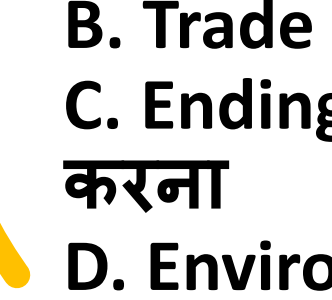
A blurred photograph of a modern office interior. In the background, several people are seated around a long wooden table, engaged in a meeting. The scene is brightly lit by large windows, creating a soft, out-of-focus atmosphere. The text "Top 10 MCQ from the session for every exam" is overlaid in the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


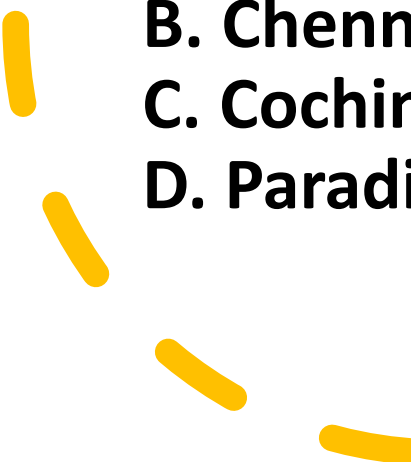
Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

-
- What major policy change was introduced by U.S. President Donald Trump regarding birthright citizenship?
 - अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप द्वारा जन्मसिद्ध नागरिकता के संबंध में कौन सा प्रमुख नीति परिवर्तन पेश किया गया?
 - A. Strengthening birthright citizenship laws / जन्मसिद्ध नागरिकता कानूनों को मजबूत करना
 - B. Revoking the "citizenship by birth" provision / "जन्म से नागरिकता" प्रावधान को समाप्त करना
 - C. Allowing dual citizenship for all immigrants / सभी प्रवासियों के लिए दोहरी नागरिकता की अनुमति देना
 - D. Making citizenship automatic for Green Card holders / ग्रीन कार्ड धारकों के लिए नागरिकता को स्वचालित बनाना


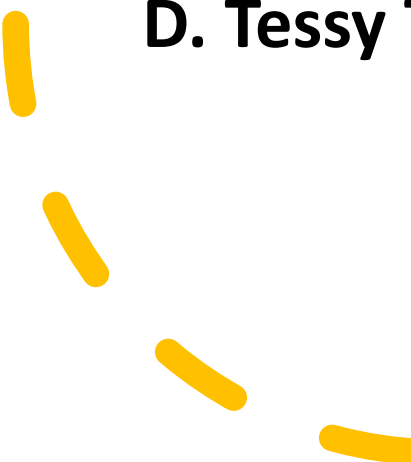
- Which international trade move by Trump could significantly impact BRICS nations?
- ट्रंप का कौन सा अंतर्राष्ट्रीय व्यापार कदम ब्रिक्स देशों को महत्वपूर्ण रूप से प्रभावित कर सकता है?
- A. 100% tariffs on non-dollar transactions / गैर-डॉलर लेन-देन पर 100% टैरिफ
- B. Banning all BRICS imports / सभी ब्रिक्स आयातों पर प्रतिबंध
- C. Imposing sanctions on BRICS nations / ब्रिक्स देशों पर प्रतिबंध लगाना
- D. Strengthening economic ties with BRICS nations / ब्रिक्स देशों के साथ आर्थिक संबंधों को मजबूत करना

- 
- **What was the impact of Trump's new policies on the Indian stock market?**
 - **ट्रंप की नई नीतियों का भारतीय शेयर बाजार पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ा?**
 - **A. BSE Sensex dropped by 1,235 points / बीएसई सेंसेक्स 1,235 अंक गिरा**
 - **B. NSE Nifty fell by 320 points / एनएसई निफ्टी 320 अंक गिरा**
 - **C. Both A and B / ए और बी दोनों**
 - **D. The market saw no impact / बाजार पर कोई प्रभाव नहीं पड़ा**

- 
- What key issue did 18 Democrat-led states challenge in court against Trump?
 - 18 डेमोक्रेट-शासित राज्यों ने ट्रंप के खिलाफ अदालत में किस प्रमुख मुद्दे को चुनौती दी?
 - A. Immigration policies / आव्रजन नीतियां
 - B. Trade tariffs / व्यापार शुल्क
 - C. Ending birthright citizenship / जन्मसिद्ध नागरिकता को समाप्त करना
 - D. Environmental regulations / पर्यावरणीय नियम
- 


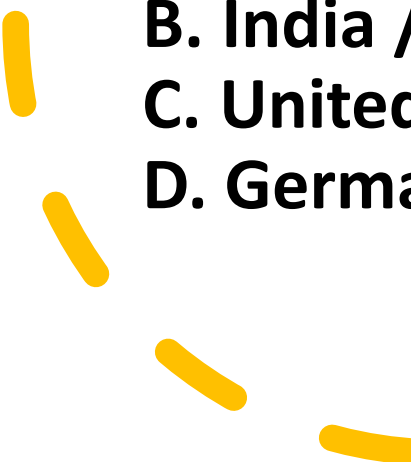
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- Which port in India is set to become the first to handle 10 million TEUs by 2027?
 - भारत में कौन सा बंदरगाह 2027 तक 10 मिलियन TEU को संभालने वाला पहला बंदरगाह बनने वाला है?
 - A. Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPA) / जवाहरलाल नेहरू पोर्ट (JNPA)
B. Chennai Port / चेन्नई पोर्ट
C. Cochin Port / कोचीन पोर्ट
D. Paradip Port / पारादीप पोर्ट
- 

-
- What major infrastructure upgrade is taking place at JNPA?
 - JNPA में कौन सा प्रमुख बुनियादी ढांचा उन्नयन हो रहा है?
 - A. Expansion of Bharat Mumbai Container Terminal / भारत मुंबई कंटेनर टर्मिनल का विस्तार
 - B. Development of Nhava Sheva Freeport Terminal / न्हावा शेवा फ्रीपोर्ट टर्मिनल का विकास
 - C. VadHAVAN Port Project under PPP model / पीपीपी मॉडल के तहत वधावन पोर्ट परियोजना
 - D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी

- 
- Who recently won the Gates-Cambridge Impact Prize 2025?
 - गेट्स-केंब्रिज इम्पैक्ट प्राइज 2025 हाल ही में किसने जीता?
 - A. Anil Kakodkar / अनिल काकोडकर
 - B. K. Sivan / के. सिवन
 - C. Urbasi Sinha / उर्बसी सिन्हा
 - D. Tessy Thomas / टेसी थॉमस
- 

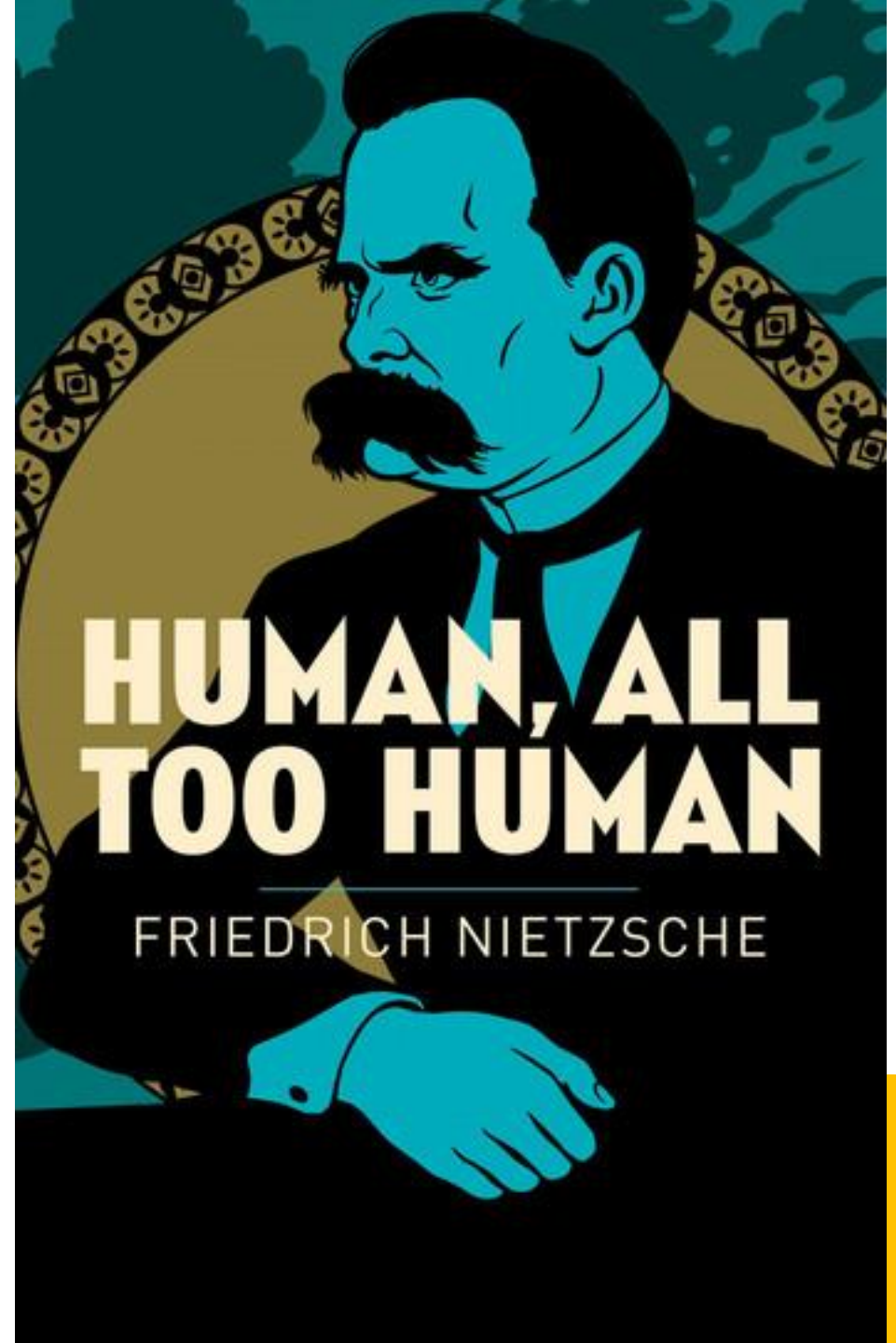
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- What is the primary goal of ISRO's NETRA project?
 - इसरो की नेट्रा परियोजना का प्राथमिक उद्देश्य क्या है?
 - A. Tracking and analyzing space objects / अंतरिक्ष वस्तुओं का ट्रैकिंग और विश्लेषण
B. Monitoring climate change effects on space / अंतरिक्ष पर जलवायु परिवर्तन प्रभावों की निगरानी
C. Developing AI-driven satellites / एआई संचालित उपग्रहों का विकास
D. Studying deep-space asteroids / डीप-स्पेस क्षुद्रग्रहों का अध्ययन

-
- What is the primary concern with the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project?
 - जैतापुर परमाणु ऊर्जा परियोजना से जुड़ी मुख्य चिंता क्या है?
 - A. High project costs and time delays / उच्च परियोजना लागत और समय में देरी
 - B. Environmental risks / पर्यावरणीय जोखिम
 - C. India's Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act / भारत का नागरिक परमाणु क्षति अधिनियम
 - D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी

- 
- Which country has the highest number of billionaires in the Forbes Billionaires List 2025?
 - फोर्ब्स बिलियनेयर्स लिस्ट 2025 में किस देश में सबसे अधिक अरबपति हैं?
 - A. China / चीन
 - B. India / भारत
 - C. United States / संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका
 - D. Germany / जर्मनी
- 

– Friedrich Nietzsche,
Human, All Too Human

- *“It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages.”*





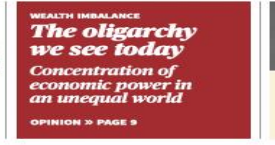
ENHANCING SENTENCE
CBI seeks death penalty for R.G. Kar convict
NEWS » PAGE 4



'HIGH AND ARBITRARY'
MPs slam user development fee charged by airports
NEWS » PAGE 5



NOT HOLDING BACK
EU 'in for tariffs': 10% for China, says Trump
WORLD » PAGE 14



WEALTH IMBALANCE
The oligarchy we see today
Concentration of economic power in an unequal world
OPINION » PAGE 9



SIZZLING SHOW
Varun, Abhishek star for India in first T20I
SPORT » PAGE 16

INSIDE



Ensure victory for BJP in Delhi poll, says Modi

NEW DELHI Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged BJP workers to ensure record voting and defeat AAP in the Delhi Assembly elections. In a webcast addressing Delhi BJP cadre, he promised to continue implementation of existing schemes in Delhi. » PAGE 5



'Burials to be held in designated graveyards only'

NEW DELHI The Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled that burials must occur in designated graveyards for each faith. It found Chhattisgarh's affidavit about a Christian graveyard vague and asked for more details. The case concerns a burial dispute over a senior citizen's burial place. » PAGE 4



Flagship scheme for girls helped combat bias: PM

NEW DELHI Prime Minister Modi stated that the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign has helped overcome gender bias, with districts showing improvement in child sex ratios. Last year, in 2015, the scheme focuses on gender equality, child sex ratio etc. » PAGE 6

13 killed as train runs over passengers amid fire scare

Karnataka Express runs over passengers who jumped out of the Lucknow-Mumbai Pushpak Express in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra. State announces an ex gratia of ₹5 lakh each for families of the deceased; PM expresses grief over the incident

The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI At least 13 people were killed when they jumped down from their train following rumours of a fire and were hit by another train speeding down the adjacent track in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra on Wednesday evening. The deceased include four women and nine men, Vijay Galkwad, medical superintendent, Government Medical College and Hospital, Jalgaon, said. At least 10 persons have been injured. Three of the injured have been admitted to hospitals in nearby Pachora, while the bodies of the dead have been sent to the Jalgaon Government Medical College for post-mortem examination. The Maharashtra government has announced an ex gratia of ₹5 lakh each for the families of the deceased. The accident occurred when sparks and smoke in



Tragic loss: Injured passengers being moved from the accident site in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district.

one of the coaches of the Lucknow-Mumbai Pushpak Express triggered panic, leading to someone pulling the train's emergency chain around 5 p.m., according to Central Railways spokesperson Swapnil Nila. The Pushpak Express came to a halt between the Mahaji and Pardhade stations, about 400 km from Mumbai. Some passengers, fear-

ing a fire, jumped out on to the tracks and were run over by the Karnataka Express travelling from Bengaluru to Delhi. Railway officials and the police told *The Hindu* that the sparks and smoke in the general coach likely stemmed from a "hot axle" or "brake-binding". Mr. Nila told pre-presspersons that an accident relief train was dispatched from Bhusaval. Railway Minister Ashwini

Vaishnav expressed grief over the incident and directed proper treatment for all the injured. Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray called for better safety measures, while Congress leaders Nana Patole and Vijay Wadeti criticised the government's handling of railway safety. "Anguished by the tragic accident on the railway tracks in Jalgaon, Maha-

rashtra, I extend my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the speedy recovery of all the injured. Authorities are providing all possible assistance to those affected," Prime Minister Modi said on X.

Full assistance "The tragic loss of lives in a very unfortunate incident near Pachora in Jalgaon district is deeply distressing. I pay my heartfelt tributes to them," Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said in a video message from Daxos in Switzerland. "Emergency equipment like glass cutters, floodlights etc. have been kept ready. We are monitoring the entire situation and all necessary assistance is being provided immediately. I am in touch with the district administration." Mr. Vaishnav expressed deep grief over the incident. **MOMENTS OF HORROR** » PAGE 4

14 killed in two road accidents in Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau

HUBBALLI Fourteen persons were killed and 29 injured in two road accidents in two districts of Karnataka on Tuesday night and in the early hours of Wednesday. Ten persons were killed and 12 injured when a truck overturned in the Arabal ghat region in Uttara Karnataka district. In the other accident, near Sindhanur of Raichur district late on Tuesday night, four persons were killed and 10 were injured when their multi-utility vehicle over turned.

FULL REPORT » PAGE 3



Strong impact: A crane lifts the truck that overturned in Yellapur on Wednesday, killing 10 persons. PM

JD(U)'s lone MLA withdraws support to govt. in Manipur

Rahul Karmakar
Amaranath Tewary
GUWAHATI/PATNA The Janata Dal (United) JD(U) withdrew support to the Nongthombam Biren Singh-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Manipur on Wednesday. However, reacting to the party removed its Manipur state president, who has stayed aloof since ethnic conflict broke out in May 2022. **NPP's support** The BJP also enjoys the support of the Naga President Kohbrintmayum Biren Singh has four MLAs following the death a few days ago of N. Kayishi. In a letter to Governor

No threat JD(U) MLA's decision is unlikely to threaten the BJP, which has 37 MLAs in the 60-member House. **Ajay Kumar Bhalla** on Wednesday, State party president Kohbrintmayum Biren Singh said the JD(U) no longer supports the BJP-led Manipur government and its lone MLA "shall be treated as an Opposition MLA in the House". The JD(U) had won six seats in the 2022 Assembly election but five of its MLAs joined the BJP later. "The trial of the five MLAs is pending

under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India before the Speaker's Tribunal," the State JD(U) president's letter said. The party's national spokesperson Rajiv Ranjan Prasad called the reports on the issue "misleading and baseless". "The president of the Manipur unit of the party has been relieved of his post. We have supported the NDA and our support to the NDA government in Manipur will continue even in future." Mr. Prasad said the Manipur unit did not consult the central leadership of the party. "The (the Manipur JD(U) chief) had written the letter on his own. This is an act of blatant indiscipline," Mr. Prasad

said. "We are with the NDA and the State unit will continue to serve the people of Manipur towards the development of the State," he added. Meanwhile, the Congress took the opportunity to take potshots at the growing differences between the BJP and JD(U). "Today, JD(U) withdrew support to the Government in Manipur. Yesterday, JD(U) opposed the new UGC Rules which have been announced by the Modi Government to control top appointments to all universities. Is this heralding political change? Congress general secretary (communication) Jairam Ramesh wrote on X.

Marco Rubio meets Jaishankar, calls for talks with India on illegal migration

the deportation of 18,000 Indians on the list. The revocation of citizenship by birth, which is due to be implemented within 30 days if not annulled by U.S. courts, would affect hundreds of thousands of Indians working in the U.S. on H-1B and other temporary visas and hoping to raise families there. Neither side referred to Mr. Trump's other statement, that he would levy a 100% tax on members of emerging economies. Earlier, Mr. Jaishankar attended the Quad FMM along with the Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Japanese Foreign Minister Iwaya Tetsish, which was Mr. Rubio's first foreign policy engagement after meeting State Department staff. A joint statement issued by the four Ministers said that they "strongly opposed any unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion," a message believed to be aimed at China's actions in the region. The statement was significant as Chinese Vice-Premier Hanng Zhong was one of the senior dignitaries that attended Mr. Trump's inauguration on Monday; he was deputed to represent China after Mr. Trump invited Chinese President Xi Jinping. The next Quad Summit is due to be held in India. "We look forward to advancing the work of the Quad and will meet on a regular basis as we prepare for the next Quad Leaders' Summit hosted by India," the Quad Ministers' state ment read. Mr. Jaishankar said that it was "significant that the Quad FMM took place within hours of the inauguration of the Trump Administration." "This underlines the priority it has in the foreign policy of its member states," he wrote on X.



U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio meets with India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in Washington, on Tuesday. ANI

Sahasni Haidar
NEW DELHI The U.S. wants to address the issue of illegal migration with India, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during their meeting in Washington. The bilateral meeting was Mr. Rubio's first with any foreign dignitary after taking charge of the U.S. State Department on Tuesday. The comments on immigration issues came a day after U.S. President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order cancelling "birthright citizenship". A readout issued by the U.S. State Department on Wednesday said the two leaders had discussed a "wide range of issues" including "advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific region." "Secretary Rubio also emphasised the Trump Administration's desire to work with India to advance economic ties and address concerns related to irregular migration," it said. Mr. Jaishankar, who posted photographs of the meeting on social media, did not refer to the conversation on "irregular migration". **Extensive bilateral ties** The Minister said the meeting reviewed the "extensive bilateral partnership, of which Mr. Rubio has been a strong advocate, adding that they had views on regional and global issues. "I look forward to closely working with him to advance our strategic cooperation." "There are an estimated 7.25 lakh undocumented Indians in the U.S. among 14 million in total according to the U.S. Immigration agency ICE, of which nearly 18,000 are on a list for "final removal" or deportations. India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) did not respond to requests for a comment on Mr. Rubio's statement, nor did it respond to reports that India has agreed to cooperate in

CHANGED DYNAMICS » PAGE 8

Changed dynamics India must chart a new transactional course with Trump administration

The first 48 hours of U.S. President Donald Trump's second term have been proof of the radical shifts he plans over four years, with the overarching theme of putting "America First". While the exact nature of these shifts during his first term should give those in New Delhi attempting to strategise for this term some comfort, his moves now make it clear that it will be necessary to expect the unexpected as well. The slew of Executive Orders changes U.S. policy on energy, the environment and climate change, trade and global taxes, citizenship routes, health, border control and immigration. But the new administration has shown it is keen to engage India: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who was invited along with other Quad Foreign Ministers at the inaugural ceremony, was the first Foreign Minister to hold a one-on-one bilateral meeting with new U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio. The readout of their meeting and the Quad Foreign Ministers' joint statement make it clear that the two sides are on the same page on the Indo-Pacific partnership, concerns over Chinese actions, critical and emerging technology cooperation, strategic and defence ties. Yet, some Trump public pronouncements have set alarm bells ringing, notably on trade, immigration and the cancellation of climate agreements. India has escaped being named in the first round of tariff announcements, but Mr. Trump's comments on a "100% tariff" against all members of the BRICS emerging economies grouping raised some suspense and a possible market reaction. In his first term, he had withdrawn India's GST status affecting Indian exporters. On immigration, he has announced a "rapid re-entry" and authorised a crackdown on illegal and undocumented immigrants, and warned of mass deportations of visa holders and other Indians working there, by cancelling the automatic path to citizenship for any children born in the U.S. with parents with 725,000 undocumented Indians, any action to deport them in large numbers, beginning with about 10,000-20,000 on the immigration "final list for removal", will be a major crisis for India. In this context, Mr. Rubio's statement in talks with Mr. Jaishankar that they must address the "irregular migration" should be taken seriously. So too should Mr. Trump's pronouncements insisting on investments in the U.S., hiring in the U.S., and the buying of U.S. energy. The new administration's geopolitical outlook appears to be set on devaluing the multilateral world order, withdrawing from U.S. commitments of support to WHO, the WTO, and the UN, and putting NATO allies on notice. The signs, therefore, are that India must be prepared for a U.S. administration that will not be particularly sensitive to India's concerns or be willing partner in India's growth unless it can benefit for itself, and instead chart a more transactional course, while moving to limit the damage from any adverse actions of the Trump era.

An exit of bluster

The rest of the world must reassess the U.S. role in fighting climate change.

President Donald Trump has fired his holocauster at multilateralism by signing into decree the United States' withdrawal from the 2015 Paris Agreement. This sets records that are in a class of their own. The U.S. is the only country to have withdrawn from a climate agreement — beginning with George W. Bush's withdrawal, in 2001, from the Kyoto Protocol. Mr. Trump, of course, sets a record by being the only President to withdraw from a climate agreement twice. In the run-up to the Paris deal, there is a pall of gloom in the climate world over what the U.S.'s latest exit might mean, particularly when the globe has fixed the first full calendar year above the 1.5° Celsius mark. The U.S. is the second largest emitter of greenhouse gases. By virtue of being the most powerful economy, it has arrogated to itself the mantle of "global leadership" in addressing climate change. But now that the leader has had the spottiest track record of keeping to the terms of a significant agreement — one, whose rule book the U.S. played a major role in compiling — perhaps it is time for the rest of the world to reassess America's role in addressing climate change. Under both Republican and Democratic governments, U.S. domestic policy has given greenhouse gas emissions had been subservient to business interests. Oil and gas production has increased under the Biden administration. The U.S. remains the world's largest crude oil producer, achieving record production in 2023. The country is also the world's largest producer of gas and, in 2022, became the world's largest exporter for liquefied natural gas (LNG). Mr. Trump has only committed to add to this already substantial base. The U.S. is critically short of action to meet its 2030 greenhouse gas emissions. As of 2022, the U.S. has achieved only about one-third of its 2030 emissions reduction target. In the last weeks of his Presidency, Mr. Biden increased the U.S.'s emission-reduction commitments to meet 2030 levels by 2025. This, too, calculations suggest, will be insufficient to meet a 1.5° C target. Private capital propping up renewable energy has grown exponentially since Mr. Bush, and is now too substantial for Mr. Trump and his ilk to wish to ignore. While it will take a year for the exit to be formalised, it is likely that the U.S.'s behind-the-scenes engagement — especially the next climate meet (COP 30) in Brazil in November 2025 — will continue. The politics of Mr. Trump suggests that he is not averse to running with the bare and burning with the bounds.

Over 70 years ago, Ian Fleming created the fictional character of a secret service agent called James Bond, code named 007, who had the licence to kill. On September 1, 1983, a Korean Airlines jet, flight 007, on a scheduled flight from New York to Seoul via Anchorage, was shot down by a Russian Air Force Sukhoi fighter plane when the Korean flight had deviated from its flight path due to a navigational error. All 246 passengers and 23 crew were killed. One of the passengers was the daughter of Hans Eppuraimson Abt, who began an organisation to aid the victims of air accidents. His initiative resulted in a big push at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to publish rules regarding conflict risk. But this was shot down by Russia and its allies in ICAG.

Cases of misidentification
On July 3, 1988, an Iran Air plane, flight 655, was shot down by a United States Navy warship, USS Vincennes, over the Strait of Hormuz. All 290 passengers were killed when the ship's missile brought down the plane which was misidentified to be a fighter plane. During the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88), U.S. patrolling required civilian aircraft to transmit the Identification Friend or Foe mode code. Apparently, the warship crew identified the Iranian aircraft to be a fighter and crew were issued to shoot it down.

On November 22, 2003, a DHL Cargo plane took off from Baghdad for Bahrain. As the flight was making a rapid climb over a sand dune, a missile launched by terrorists struck the left wing between the engine and the wing tip. The crew lost all hydraulics and because the fuel tank was full, there were no fuel vapours to explode in the exposed fuel tank. The crew controlled the flight using only differential engine thrust and managed to carry out a safe landing, displaying exceptional skill. This writer had the privilege of attending a special presentation by the crew at the Flight Safety Foundation IACS 2004 seminar at Shanghai, China.

On February 27, 2019, just after Balakot, when fighter planes of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Pakistan Air Force were engaged in a dogfight, an IAF Mi-17 helicopter was shot down by a surface-to-air missile of the IAF's air defence system. Six personnel lost their lives in that was a serious error. Here again, the helicopter was wrongly identified as a foe.



Captain A. Ramnathan (Mumbai)
is a former airline instructor pilot and aviation safety adviser. He is also a former member of the Civil Aviation Safety Advisory Council (CASAC), India.

With military conflicts and incidents of air crashes, state players posing threats to civil aviation rising, the issue of training proficiency and skills assumes importance

China's moves must recast India's critical minerals push

On January 2, 2025, China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) expanded its export control list by including 28 entities from the United States, effectively restricting their access to a swath of items classified under dual-use export controls. At the core of these restrictions lie minerals and rare earth materials that are vital for high-technology applications such as aerospace, semiconductors, batteries, and advanced electronics. Beijing's list encompasses tungsten, gallium, magnesium, beryllium, hafnium, lithium-6 (isotope), and others — minerals with uses ranging from chip production to specialty alloys.

This is not the first time that China has weaponised the exports of its critical minerals. And it is an approach that is strategic and calculated. Being primarily target minerals that are deemed to be critical by western nations and their allies, especially those essential for semiconductors, batteries, and high-tech manufacturing. However, China carefully balances these decisions against two constraining factors: It avoids controlling minerals which are heavily dependent on western raw material supplies. And it refrains from actions that could disrupt its domestic industrial enterprises or export-dependent sectors. This strategic calculus was evident in China's rare earth minerals embargo against Japan in 2010, its recent restrictions on antimony, gallium, and germanium exports, and its ban, in December 2023, on rare earth extraction and processing technologies.

The situation in India
Meanwhile, policymakers in the United States and elsewhere are becoming increasingly concerned. These developments underscore a larger trend: the competition for critical minerals has become a fulcrum of international economic diplomacy. For nations such as India, these events are also a wake-up call — to improve domestic mineral exploration and production capacity.

India's push for critical minerals development



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India's critical minerals development
The more the world's semiconductor fabrication model

On July 17, 2004, a Malaysia Airlines flight, MH17, from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur with 283 passengers and 15 crew, was shot down by Russian-backed forces in a surface-to-air missile while flying over eastern Ukraine.

All these examples highlight the issue of misidentification. Post September 11, 2001, there are specific procedures to follow in the event of track deviation due to weather, or a failure of navigation signals. Specific radio procedures are maintained to allow for the event of a fighter jet misidentifying a civilian aircraft if perceived to be flying in a suspicious manner. On February 16, 2017, an Air India flight, Jet Airways flight 9W 118, with 330 passengers and 15 crew members, flew from Mumbai to London, was cruising at 36,000 feet. It flew over a few flight information regions without maintaining radio contact with the air traffic control of the region. The plane had not deviated from its assigned track. When it entered German airspace north of Cologne, the German Air Force deployed two of its Eurofighter Typhoons to intercept the Indian plane. Had the Jet Airways crew not responded to the Germans on an emergency frequency, they could have been shot down.

India's safety regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), did a cover up terming it as a malfunction of the aircraft's communication system. If it was really a communication failure, the flight crew should have been using the necessary transponder code and a radio station would have kept track of an aircraft facing communication failure. Fighter jets would not have been deployed to intercept the plane.

Conflict zones, their dangers
The case of an Azerbaijan airliner, while on a flight from Baku in Azerbaijan to Grozny, in Russia, on December 25, 2024, after it crashed near the Kazakhstani city of Aktau after being posing threats to civil aviation rising, the issue of training proficiency and skills assumes importance

has faced stubborn challenges. In 2023, lithium deposits that were found in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district made headlines, hinting at a potential gamechanger for India's energy transition. However, a little over a year later, the story remains lacklustre: no company has shown interest in bidding for these reserves and the block remains in limbo. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident. India's mineral portfolio that only 48% (24 out of 49) of the mineral blocks available for auction in recent years have been auctioned.

This lack of market enthusiasm cannot be pinned entirely on government negligence. Over the last few years, the Union government has introduced measures to spur activity in critical minerals. The Ministry of Mines identified 30 critical minerals that are deemed essential for national security. And before that, the Union government set up a designated body, Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL), which has been tasked with obtaining overseas investment in critical minerals such as lithium and cobalt. Parliament passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 which sets restrictive classifications on some rare earth minerals. And it refrains from actions that could disrupt its domestic industrial enterprises or export-dependent sectors. This strategic calculus was evident in China's rare earth minerals embargo against Japan in 2010, its recent restrictions on antimony, gallium, and germanium exports, and its ban, in December 2023, on rare earth extraction and processing technologies.

Reforms and results
A key highlight of the 2023 amendments is the introduction of an "exploration license", devised to attract private-sector exploration agencies, including foreign companies, to survey potentially rich but unexplored mineral deposits. Instead of having to commit to a full-scale mining operation that can take over a plane faces semiconductor fabrication model

or a loss of signals that affect navigation. More than 500 people have lost their lives due to civil airlines being shot down. With growing wars and conflicts, flying over or near conflict zones is becoming dangerous, especially when there are countries which do not respect international borders and there are rogue elements who cause trouble by interfering with GPS signals.

The Indian regulator's silence
This brings the focus on a serious issue. The airlines in India have comprehensive training in place for pilots to recognise jammed signals and do the airlines have standard operating procedures in place for taking over the navigation with alternate methods? There are reports of GPS errors or failures in the airspace over Pakistan, Afghanistan and Myanmar. With a rapid expansion of flights and with large numbers of aircraft being inducted, do airlines in India have enough experienced pilots? For example, Air India operates many of its non-stop flights to the west coast of the United States on routes that are avoided by American carriers. There are also reports of some leased aircraft with Air India not being equipped for extended flights over mountainous terrain. We hear nothing from the DGCA on what preventive measures it is taking in these cases.

We have had three passenger aircraft shot down by the Russians or Russian-linked agents. We have had the U.S. Navy shooting down a passenger airliner. We have had a cargo aircraft shot by a terrorist group with missiles supplied by either Russia or the U.S. as conflicts in West Asia have involved one or the other super power. The large-scale use of drones and defence forces using missiles to shoot down flights makes the skies really unsafe for passenger aircraft while flying over conflict regions. There is another danger. Skill levels have dropped as there is now rapid training which has resulted in degraded monitoring to assess pilot proficiency. The world has to wake up to the cognisance of this new danger. Indian aviation may be expanding rapidly but, at the same time, there is no urgency or compulsion to ensure quality of pilots' flying skills. As James Reason's Swiss cheese theory explains, the holes in the cheese are lining up.

Do we act now or let another disaster pass?

licences for minerals such as lithium, rare earth elements, and graphite have been cleared, and those mostly went to Indian public sector firms. Foreign participation is sparse, and further downstream, mining licence auctions for critical minerals have largely stalled.

One explanation is that India's resource classification system is outdated, leaving miners unsure about the commercial viability of mineral blocks. Exploration levels — often categorised under international norms as A1, C2, C3, or G4 — require progressively detailed geological data on one-grade and quantity. Many auctioned blocks in India have yet to reach advanced exploration status, making them riskier to prospective bidders. That said, a more puzzling factor is the lack of a clear view of the resource's true value — an option that should, in principle, help de-risk investments but evidently has not had the intended effect.

Fiscal incentives may be essential
This brings us to the essential role of high-quality data. Exploration is at the heart of mitigating "information asymmetry", where potential buyers (mining companies) and the seller (government) do not share a clear view of the resource's true value. Without robust geological surveys, many bidders discount their offers or abstain entirely. The result is suboptimal auctions, with some potentially valuable blocks simply overlooked.

A possible remedy is to offer larger upfront fiscal incentives during the exploration phase. In other words, the solution might be to approach critical minerals extraction as a semiconductor fabrication project. In chip manufacturing — potentially rich but unexplored mineral deposits. Instead of having to commit to a full-scale mining operation that can take over a plane faces semiconductor fabrication model

may be cause for worry for the rest of the world's economy. **R. Narayanan, Navi Mumbai**

With America's second exit from the Paris climate agreement, the world faces greater danger. The current emission-cut commitments of countries do not match the Paris pact's goals, there must be more resolve to ensure that mitigation ambitions are still met. **Jeyaraman, Sholavandan, Tamil Nadu**

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

China's moves must recast India's critical minerals push

On January 2, 2025, China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) expanded its export control list by including 28 entities from the United States, effectively restricting their access to a swath of items classified under dual-use export controls. At the core of these restrictions lies minerals and rare and refined materials that are vital for high-technology applications such as in aerospace, semiconductors, batteries, and advanced electronics. Beijing's list encompasses tungsten, gallium, magnesium, beryllium, hafnium, lithium-6 (isotope), and others – minerals with uses ranging from chip production to speciality alloys.

This is not the first time that China has weaponised the exports of its critical minerals. And it is an approach that is strategic and calculated. Beijing primarily targets minerals that are deemed to be critical by western nations and their allies, especially those essential for semiconductors, batteries, and high-tech manufacturing. However, China carefully balances these decisions against two constraining factors: it avoids controlling minerals which are heavily dependent on western raw material imports. And it refrains from actions that could disrupt its domestic industrial enterprises or export-dependent sectors. This strategic calculus was evident in China's rare earth minerals embargo against Japan in 2010, its recent restrictions on antimony, gallium, and germanium exports, and its ban, in December 2023, on rare earth extraction and processing technologies.

The situation in India

Meanwhile, policymakers in the United States and elsewhere are becoming increasingly concerned. These developments underscore a larger trend: the competition for critical minerals has become a fulcrum of international economic diplomacy. For nations such as India, these events are also a wake-up call – to improve domestic mineral exploration and production capacity.

India's push for critical minerals development



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India's critical minerals development plans face challenges; a way out may be to adopt the semiconductor fabrication model

has faced stubborn challenges. In 2023, lithium deposits that were found in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district made headlines, hinting at a game-changer moment for India's energy transition. However, a little over a year later, the story remains lacklustre: no company has shown interest in bidding for these resources, and the block remains in limbo. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident. Government data show that only 48% (24 out of 49) of the mineral blocks available for auction in recent years have been auctioned.

This lack of market enthusiasm cannot be pinned entirely on government negligence. Over the last three years, the Union government has introduced measures to spur activity in critical minerals. The Ministry of Mines identified 30 critical minerals that are deemed essential for national security. And before that, the Union government set up a designated body, Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL), which has been tasked with obtaining overseas investments in critical minerals such as lithium and cobalt. Parliament passed the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023, lifting restrictive classifications on some rare earth elements that used to be considered 'atomic minerals'. These reforms theoretically opened the door for greater private-sector investment and technology sharing.

Reforms and results

A key highlight of the 2023 amendments is the introduction of an 'exploration license', devised to attract specialised resource exploration agencies, including foreign companies, to survey potentially rich but geologically challenging deposits. Instead of having to commit to a full-scale mining operation that can take over a decade or more to turn profitable, these exploratory firms can now participate in reconnaissance and prospecting alone. The law also promises to reimburse 50% of the exploration expenditure once mining begins, aiming to de-risk early-stage operations.

Despite these promising reforms, the results have been tepid. Only a handful of exploration

licences for minerals such as lithium, rare earth elements, and graphite have been cleared, and those mostly went to Indian public sector firms. Foreign participation is sparse, and further downstream, mining license auctions for critical minerals have largely stalled.





One explanation is that India's resource classification system is outdated, leaving miners unsure about the commercial viability of mineral blocks. Exploration levels – often categorised under international norms as G1, G2, G3, or G4 – require progressively detailed geological data on ore grade and quantity. Many auctioned blocks in India have yet to reach advanced exploration status, making them riskier to prospective bidders. That said, a more puzzling factor is the low demand for exploration licences themselves – an option that should, in principle, help de-risk investments but evidently has not had the intended effect.

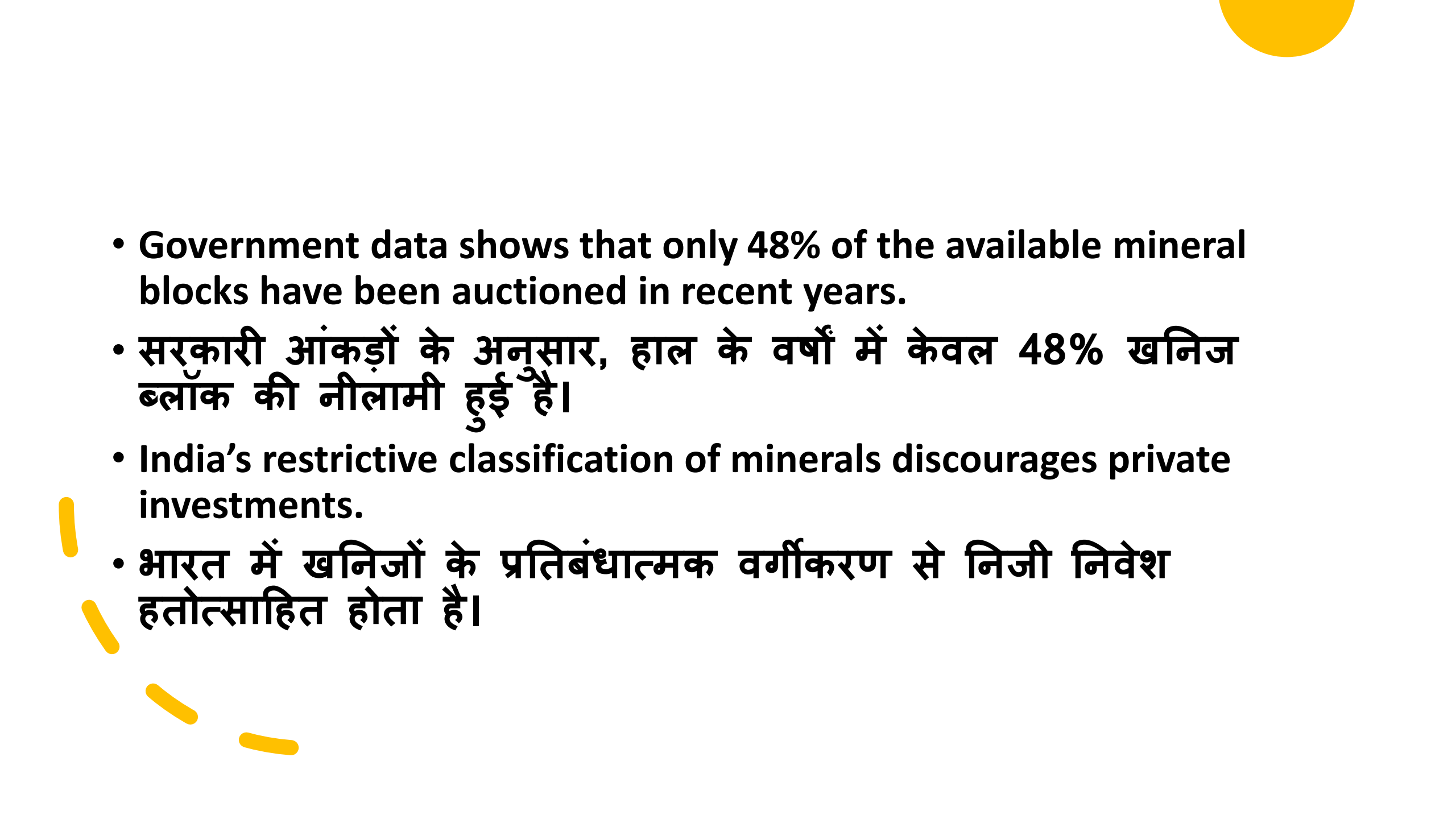
Fiscal incentives may be essential


This brings us to the essential role of high-quality data. Exploration is at the heart of mitigating 'information asymmetry', where potential buyers (mining companies) and the seller (government) do not share a clear view of the resource's true value. Without robust geological surveys, many bidders discount their offers or abstain entirely. The result is suboptimal auctions, with some potentially valuable blocks simply overlooked.



A possible remedy is to offer larger upfront fiscal incentives during the exploration phase. In other words, the solution might be to approach critical minerals extraction as a semiconductor fabrication project. In chip manufacturing – another sector with enormous upfront costs and slow returns – India has taken an aggressive approach, pledging direct capital support early in the construction phase. A similar model could work for critical minerals, offsetting immediate exploration costs instead of reimbursing them only after production begins. Upfront capital support for exploration would resolve a market failure and help unlock value many times over in downstream mining, exploration, sales, and exports.



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- **China's Strategic Restrictions on Critical Minerals / चीन द्वारा महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों पर रणनीतिक प्रतिबंध**
 - **China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) expanded export controls, restricting key minerals like tungsten, lithium, magnesium, and beryllium.**
 - **चीन के वाणिज्य मंत्रालय (MOFCOM) ने महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों जैसे टंगस्टन, लिथियम, मैग्नीशियम और बेरीलियम के निर्यात पर नियंत्रण बढ़ा दिया।**
 - **These minerals are crucial for semiconductors, aerospace, and battery industries.**
 - **ये खनिज अर्धचालक, एयरोस्पेस और बैटरी उद्योगों के लिए महत्वपूर्ण हैं।**
 - **China has previously imposed similar restrictions, such as the rare earth minerals embargo on Japan in 2010.**
 - **चीन ने पहले भी 2010 में जापान पर दुर्लभ पृथ्वी खनिजों का निर्यात प्रतिबंध लगाया था।**

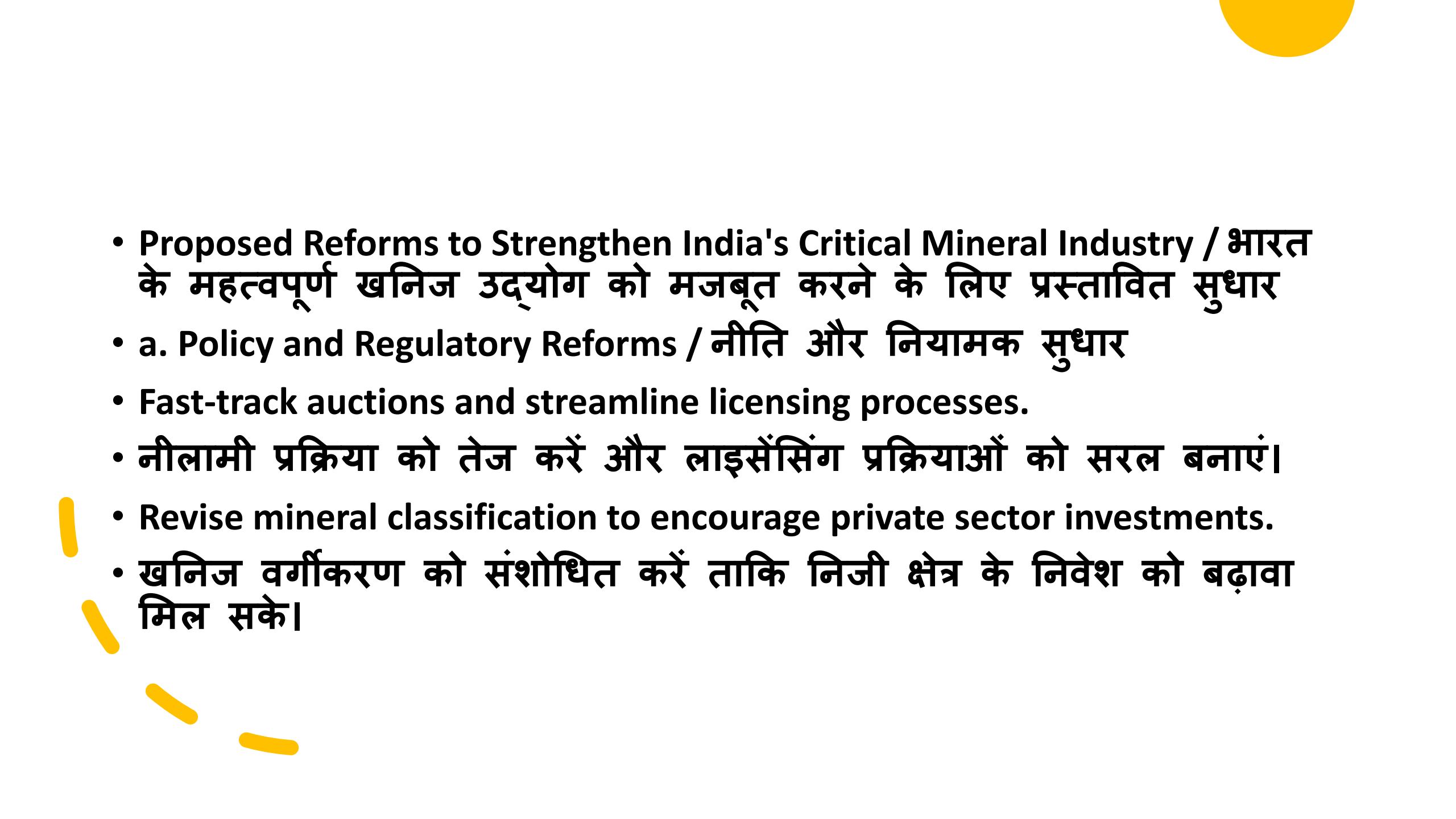
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- India's Current Challenges in Critical Mineral Development / भारत की महत्वपूर्ण खनिज विकास में चुनौतियाँ
 - India has vast reserves of critical minerals but lacks proper mining and exploration initiatives.
 - भारत के पास महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों का विशाल भंडार है, लेकिन उचित खनन और अन्वेषण पहलों की कमी है।
 - 2023 saw the discovery of lithium reserves in Jammu and Kashmir, but auctioning efforts have been slow.
 - 2023 में जम्मू-कश्मीर में लिथियम के भंडार की खोज हुई, लेकिन नीलामी की प्रक्रिया धीमी रही।
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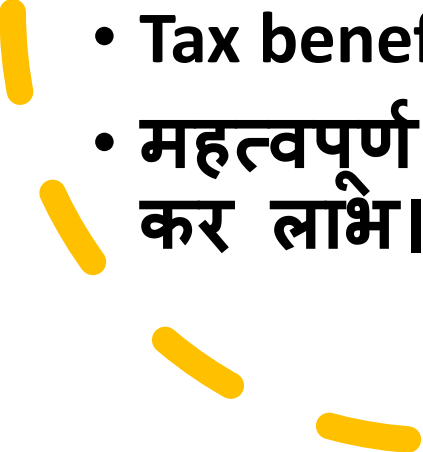
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- Government data shows that only 48% of the available mineral blocks have been auctioned in recent years.
 - सरकारी आंकड़ों के अनुसार, हाल के वर्षों में केवल 48% खनिज ब्लॉक की नीलामी हुई है।
 - India's restrictive classification of minerals discourages private investments.
 - भारत में खनिजों के प्रतिबंधात्मक वर्गीकरण से निजी निवेश हतोत्साहित होता है।


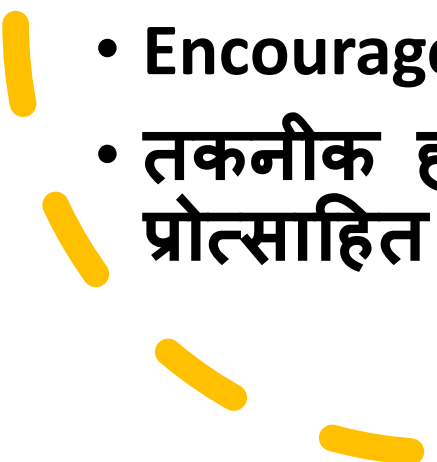
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- Political, Geographical, Economic, and Historical Context / राजनीतिक, भौगोलिक, आर्थिक और ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ
 - Political Context / राजनीतिक संदर्भ
 - The Chinese restrictions impact India's push for self-reliance in strategic industries.
 - चीनी प्रतिबंध भारत के रणनीतिक उद्योगों में आत्मनिर्भरता की दिशा में बाधा उत्पन्न करते हैं।
 - India's Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 aims to facilitate critical mineral extraction.
 - भारत का खान और खनिज (विकास और विनियमन) संशोधन अधिनियम, 2023 महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों के निष्कर्षण को सुगम बनाने का प्रयास करता है।



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- **Geographical Context / भौगोलिक संदर्भ**
 - **India has untapped reserves of rare earth elements in states like Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand.**
 - **भारत के आंध्र प्रदेश, राजस्थान और झारखंड जैसे राज्यों में दुर्लभ पृथ्वी तत्वों का अपार भंडार है।**
 - **China controls over 70% of the global rare earth supply, making India vulnerable.**
 - **चीन वैश्विक दुर्लभ पृथ्वी आपूर्ति का 70% से अधिक नियंत्रण रखता है, जिससे भारत असुरक्षित स्थिति में है।**
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- **Economic Context / आर्थिक संदर्भ**
 - **The lack of exploration reduces India's ability to develop a domestic supply chain for critical industries.**
 - **अन्वेषण की कमी भारत की घरेलू आपूर्ति श्रृंखला विकसित करने की क्षमता को कम कर देती है।**
 - **China's monopolization increases prices, affecting Indian manufacturers.**
 - **चीन का एकाधिकार कीमतों को बढ़ाता है, जिससे भारतीय विनिर्माताओं पर असर पड़ता है।**
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- **Proposed Reforms to Strengthen India's Critical Mineral Industry / भारत के महत्वपूर्ण खनिज उद्योग को मजबूत करने के लिए प्रस्तावित सुधार**
 - **a. Policy and Regulatory Reforms / नीति और नियामक सुधार**
 - **Fast-track auctions and streamline licensing processes.**
 - **नीलामी प्रक्रिया को तेज करें और लाइसेंसिंग प्रक्रियाओं को सरल बनाएं।**
 - **Revise mineral classification to encourage private sector investments.**
 - **खनिज वर्गीकरण को संशोधित करें ताकि निजी क्षेत्र के निवेश को बढ़ावा मिल सके।**

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- **Fiscal Incentives / वित्तीय प्रोत्साहन**
 - **Government support during the exploration phase can de-risk investments.**
 - **सरकार द्वारा अन्वेषण चरण में समर्थन से निवेश जोखिम कम हो सकता है।**
 - **Tax benefits for companies investing in critical mineral exploration.**
 - **महत्वपूर्ण खनिज अन्वेषण में निवेश करने वाली कंपनियों के लिए कर लाभ।**
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- **Strengthening Domestic Supply Chains / घरेलू आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाओं को मजबूत करना**
 - **Develop domestic processing units for refining critical minerals.**
 - **महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों के परिष्करण के लिए घरेलू प्रसंस्करण इकाइयां विकसित करें।**
 - **Encourage partnerships with global firms for technology transfer.**
 - **तकनीक हस्तांतरण के लिए वैश्विक कंपनियों के साथ साझेदारी को प्रोत्साहित करें।**
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- The US has declared **50 minerals critical in light of their role in national security or economic development.**
 - Japan has identified a set of 31 minerals as critical for their economy.
 - The UK considers 18 minerals critical, EU (34) and Canada (31).
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Sl. No.	Critical Mineral	Percentage (2020)	Major Import Sources (2020)
1.	Lithium	100%	Chile, Russia, China, Ireland, Belgium
2.	Cobalt	100%	China, Belgium, Netherlands, US, Japan
3.	Nickel	100%	Sweden, China, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines
4.	Vanadium	100%	Kuwait, Germany, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand
5.	Niobium	100%	Brazil, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Indonesia
6.	Germanium	100%	China, South Africa, Australia, France, US
7.	Rhenium	100%	Russia, UK, Netherlands, South Africa, China
8.	Beryllium	100%	Russia, UK, Netherlands, South Africa, China
9.	Tantalum	100%	Australia, Indonesia, South Africa, Malaysia, US
10.	Strontium	100%	China, US, Russia, Estonia, Slovenia
11.	Zirconium(zircon)	80%	Australia, Indonesia, South Africa, Malaysia, US
12.	Graphite(natural)	60%	China, Madagascar, Mozambique, Vietnam, Tanzania
13.	Manganese	50%	South Africa, Gabon, Australia, Brazil, China
14.	Chromium	2.5%	South Africa, Mozambique, Oman, Switzerland, Turkey
15.	Silicon	<1%	China, Malaysia, Norway, Bhutan, Netherlands

Table.1 The net import reliance for critical minerals of India (2020) (Source: A report on 'Unlocking Australia-India Critical Minerals Partnership Potential' by Australian Trade and Investment Commission, July 2021)

- **Q.** Despite India being one of the countries of Gondwanaland, its mining industry contributes much less to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in percentage. Discuss. **(2021)**
- **Q.** “In spite of adverse environmental impact, coal mining is still inevitable for development”. Discuss. **(2017)**

The oligarchy we see today

In his farewell remarks as U.S. President, Joe Biden was taking shape and threatening America's democracy. So said Dwight Eisenhower's cautionary warning in 1961 about the "military-industrial complex". Mr. Biden highlighted a "tech industrial complex" and said that a new Gilded Age of "robber barons" was in danger of eroding hard-won freedoms.

As *The Guardian* noted in its editorial, U.S. President Donald Roosevelt "undermined the 'malefactors of wealth' by trust-busting, creating regulatory agencies and putting land off limits to company and exploitation." Today, the question of who will rule the U.S. — the people or the new aristocrats — may ultimately be at stake, it said.

Everywhere, political and economic power are intertwined. However, the connection can occasionally turn bleak and dangerous. There are 13 billionaires in U.S. President Donald Trump's cabinet. Elon Musk, the first individual with a net worth of over \$400 billion, asked voters to brace for "temporary hardships" as his Department of Government Efficiency will reduce public spending. Mr. Musk took over \$200 million in Mr. Trump's election campaign. "Oligarchy" are already benefiting from their support for the fossil fuel-friendly President. At Mr. Trump's side are among others, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Apple's Tim Cook, and Meta's Mark Zuckerberg were present. Some of their businesses have significant contracts with the federal government.

Oligarchy across the ages
The Greek philosopher Aristotle coined the word oligarchy to contrast the ruling of a wealthy few "for corrupt and unjust purposes" with that of the aristocracy, or elite upper class. Oligarchy usually acquires power by financial means, such as making large donations to



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politicians who then govern in ways that the oligarchs specify. But oligarchs can also become powerful because of their social standing, notoriety, education, military, religious, or political ties. In his 2017 book *American Class*, historian Ron Formisano wrote about the emergence of a permanent political class on a scale never seen in American history. Rising inequality is a result of its corruption, nepotism, and self-dealing. In addition to politicians, Formisano explores the activities of lobbyists, consultants, appointed bureaucrats, pollsters, celebrity journalists, and influencers working behind the scenes. Economist Simon Johnson, however, perceived that the emergence of an American financial aristocracy gained traction during the 2008 financial crisis. In 2015, former President Jimmy Carter described the U.S. as an "oligarchy without an oligarch political body", as the *Citizens United v. FEC* Supreme Court ruling in 2010 lifted restrictions on political campaign donations.

It is oligarchy continued to a select few? As Mr. Sanders said, "... All over the world, we're seeing a small number of incredibly wealthy people running things in their favour." It would be unjust to blame only Mr. Trump for encouraging oligarchy. Several billionaires contributed to Mr. Biden's re-election campaign too.

Democracy and oligarchy
Can democracy fight against its own power, and prioritise the checks and balances on their own power, and for those of the people, as noted by Aristotle and Robert Michels. This is what happened historically. The Philippines is said to be an oligarchy because of its colonial past and powerful families. China defines itself as a communist "People's Republic", but some have referred to it as an oligarchy, as a small number of people have held the power for several decades. More recent, the term has been used to refer to affluent, powerful, and well-connected Russian businessmen. But in 2022, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders noted, "Of course the oligarchy run Russia. But guess what? Oligarchs run the United States as well."

What is the nature of oligarchy then? In his 2017 book, *American*

Playing the Punjab card in Delhi

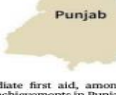
The AAP is hoping to fight anti-incumbency by riding on its achievements in Punjab

STATE OF PLAY
Vikas Vasudeva
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Delhi is going to the polls on February 5. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is trying hard to fight anti-incumbency and retain power by "showcasing" Punjab, the only full fledged State where it holds sway. A battery of ministers, legislators, and AAP leaders, including Punjab's Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, have been campaigning in Delhi over the last few weeks to project the Punjab government's work, in the run up to the Assembly polls.

The AAP came to power in Punjab by winning 92 of the 117 Assembly seats. In 2022. However, in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, out of the 13 parliamentary constituencies it contested, it won only three. This disappointing electoral performance was a major blow to the party. In the recent Assembly bypolls, the AAP won three constituencies — Gidderbaha, Dera Baba Narak, and Chahbawal, but it failed to retain its stronghold seat of Barnala in Sangrur, which is the home district of Mr. Mann.

As the AAP is close to completing three years in power in Punjab, its leaders have gone to Delhi to project the party's achievements. AAP leaders have boasted in Delhi about giving 300 units of free electricity per month to house-holds, establishing Aam Aadmi Mohalla Clinics, providing nearly 50,000 jobs, ensuring transparency in the functioning of the government, working towards reducing road accident fatalities in 2024 by deploying the Sadak Suraksha Force, who provide immediate



Punjab

first aid, among other achievements in Punjab. However, this is a gamble. The Opposition parties — the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress — are cornering the AAP in Delhi over its "failures" and unfulfilled promises in Punjab. Not just parties, but also a section of government employees and pensioners from Punjab as well as farmers have been accusing the AAP of abandoning its pre-poll promises.

In the course of campaigning for the 2022 Punjab Assembly elections, AAP leaders, including Mr. Mann, had publicly favoured the procurement of 22 crops at the minimum support price (MSP) and assured government purchase after coming to power. However, they later took a U-turn. The AAP had also promised to provide financial assistance of ₹1,000 to all women aged 18 years and above, which remains unfulfilled. It had also pledged to wipe out the drug menace from Punjab within four months of government formation. This continues to be a distant dream.

Apart from this, the AAP seized power in Punjab riding on an anti-corruption plank. But it appears to be on the defensive now on the same issue, as many of its leaders are facing a barrage of corruption charges. Several government employees and pensioners are also annoyed with the AAP for

not fulfilling its pre-poll promise of restoring the Old Pension Scheme. They have said that they will mobilise people so that the AAP is not voted back to power in Delhi.

After coming to power in Punjab, the party has, on the basis of its governance model, sought votes during Assembly elections in States such as Gujarat, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan, but its electoral performance in all these States has been poor. In Delhi, there is a sense that the electoral benefits could be limited as Delhi mostly comprises urban constituencies. In comparison to Punjab, which is an agrarian State with largely rural constituencies.

Even as the Delhi Assembly elections have occupied centre stage, the mayoral elections in the Union Territory of Chandigarh are slated to be held on January 30. The Congress and the AAP are contesting jointly against the BJP. This is unlike in Delhi, where the Congress and AAP are fighting the polls separately. This may give political ammunition to the BJP, which has also joined hands with the Lok Janshakti Party and the Janata Dal (United), to target both the Congress and the AAP in Delhi. Over the years, which AAP claims it is different from the "traditional parties" and has again sought a chance to form the government in States by playing this card. However, now the party, which is in power in two States, will be assessed on its performance. The Delhi Assembly elections are a crucial test for the AAP, which has been fighting several setbacks in the national capital. The implications of these election results would surely be seen in Punjab as well, whether the party wins or loses.

Jio leads in 12 telecom circles, Airtel dominates in nine

Vodafone Idea continues to lead in Kerala, despite its market share shrinking rapidly in recent years

DATA POINT
Nirika Francis
Nirika.Francis@thehindu.com

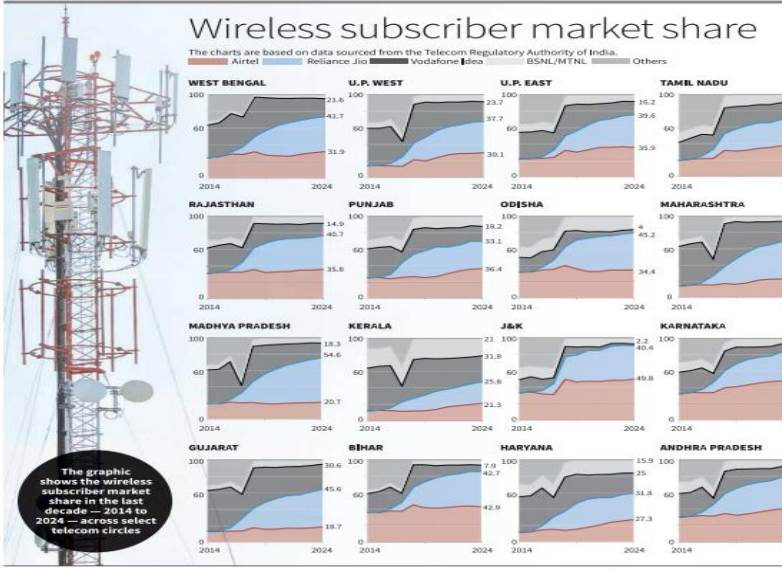
Reliance Jio leads the wireless subscriber market in 12 of India's 22 telecom circles, while Airtel dominates nine. This leaves Vodafone Idea as the leader in just one circle — Kerala.

In the north-eastern and Jammu and Kashmir circles, Airtel leads the market, with around half of the subscribers choosing the provider. In Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, and Himachal Pradesh, Airtel leads with a market share of 40-50%, while in Tamil Nadu and Punjab, it leads with a share of less than 40%.

In Madhya Pradesh, Reliance Jio has a wireless subscriber market share which is close to 55%. In Kolkata, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Reliance Jio leads with a market share of 40-50%, while in Uttar Pradesh (East and West), Mumbai, Delhi and Haryana, it leads with a share of less than 40%.

With a market share of 32%, Vodafone Idea is leading in Kerala. However, its market share in the State has sharply declined from the nearly 54% it had in 2015. Kerala is the most fragmented market with all four players — Jio, Airtel, Vodafone Idea and BSNL — holding over 20% of the wireless subscribers each. In fact, it is the only State where the State provider crossed the 20% mark.

Over the years, the market shares of Vodafone Idea and BSNL have declined sharply from their respective peaks across most States, creating a duopoly in recent years. In contrast, Airtel and Jio have reached their peak market share across most States, with very few exceptions.



The graphic shows the wireless subscriber market share in the last decade — 2014 to 2024 — across select telecom circles.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 23, 1975

China extends ping-pong diplomacy to India

New Delhi, Jan. 22: China is sending a 62-member contingent headed by a Vice-Minister for the 32nd world table tennis championship that opens in Calcutta on February 6 with all the overtones of ping-pong diplomacy combining politics with sport.

Though the number of Chinese players participating in the tournament will be only 24, the delegation will include officials, pressmen, cameramen, doctors, interpreters, security personnel and communications men.

The Chinese team will be the guests of the Indian Table Tennis Federation, but the expenses will probably be borne by the Ministry of Education. The political aspects of the visit will be looked after by the Ministry of External Affairs from Delhi. The West Bengal Chief Minister, Mr. Siddhartha Shankar Ray, who is closely associated with the tournament, will provide the necessary liaison for handling the diplomatic aspects of it.

The Chinese participation in this world table tennis championship in Calcutta has come to acquire importance because Peking has practised the art of ping-pong diplomacy with considerable success for improving its relations with the U.S. and Japan, besides establishing closer links with a number of other nations. India, too, fell in line with this innovation, when it accepted the Chinese invitation a couple of years back to participate in the Afro-Asian Latin American tournament.

Like Mao's celebrated smile, the little ping-pong ball failed to end the prevailing stalemate since meanwhile other events had further complicated the Sino-Indian situation. But it at least left the door open for minimal sporting exchanges despite the continued freeze on the political front.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 23, 1925

New cables in the Pacific

Leaford (Oxford), Mid. Jan. 22: The Pacific Cable Board is now ready to proceed with the laying of a second cable from Vancouver to Fiji. This will complete the duplication of cable from Canada to Australia and New Zealand as section south of Fiji was doubled last year. The length of the new Northern Section is 5,796 nautical miles. 3,625 nautical miles of cable will be laid between Vancouver and Fanning Island and 2,171 nautical miles between Fanning Island and Suva, Fiji.

Jio leads in 12 telecom circles, Airtel dominates in nine

Vodafone Idea continues to lead in Kerala, despite its market share shrinking rapidly in recent years

DATA POINT

Nitika Francis
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

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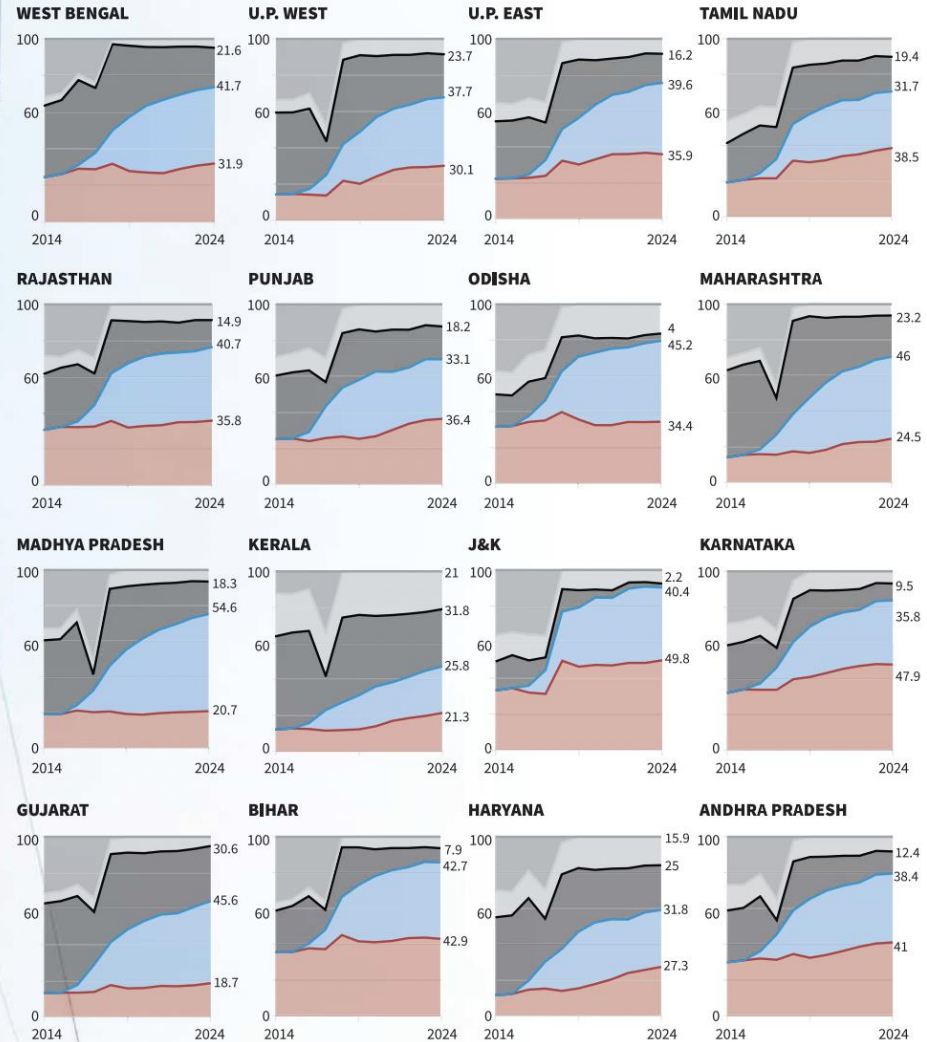
The graphic shows the wireless subscriber market share in the last decade – 2014 to 2024 – across select telecom circles.



Wireless subscriber market share

The charts are based on data sourced from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.

Legend: Airtel (Red), Reliance Jio (Blue), Vodafone Idea (Black), BSNL/MTNL (Grey), Others (Light Grey)



The graphic shows the wireless subscriber market share in the last decade – 2014 to 2024 – across select telecom circles

OVERALL SUBSCRIBER BASE DROPS BY 1.76 MILLION

BSNL witnesses subscriber loss after 4 months in Nov, Jio adds

JATIN GROVER
New Delhi, January 22

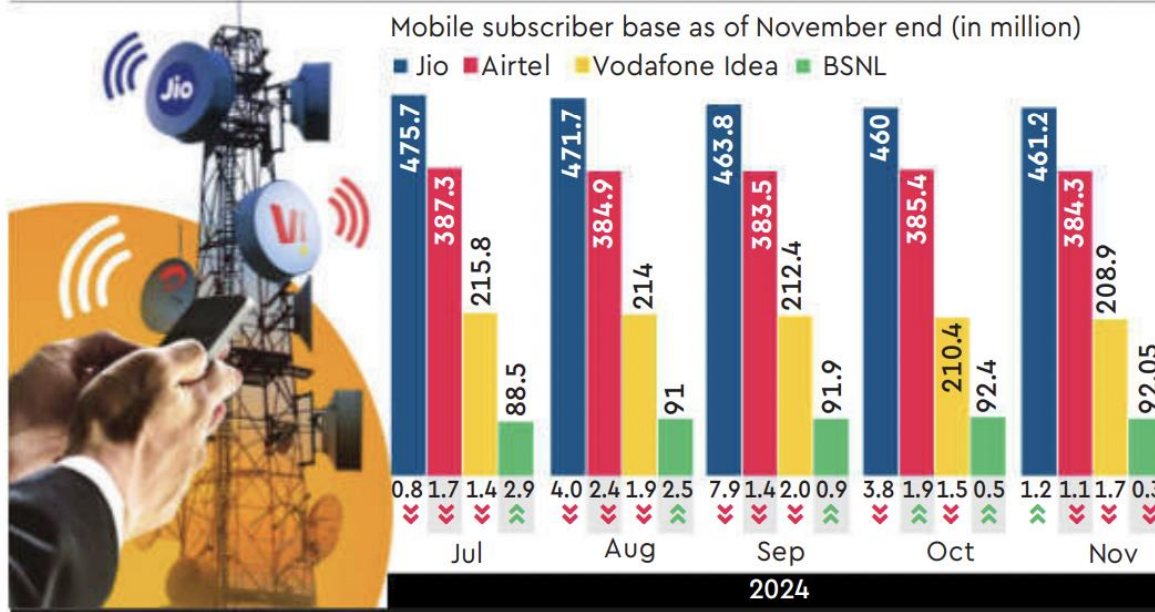
STATE-OWNED BHARAT Sanchar Nigam (BSNL), which was seen gaining mobile users after tariff hikes by private telecom operators in July last year, has now started seeing subscribers loss, according to data by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai).

In November, the telecom operator lost 344,473 mobile users after continuously adding the subscribers for four straight months. BSNL, which was benefitting from its low tariffs, added close to 7 million mobile users from July to October period.

The company, however, started losing subscribers due to weak quality of services and absence of 4G services pan-India, analysts said.

As of November end, BSNL's subscribers were at

PRICE HIKE EFFECT



92.05 million.

Reliance Jio, which is the market leader, added 1.2 million users, bucking the trend of losing subscribers for the last four months, due to tariff

hikes and impact of SIM card consolidation.

As of November end, the company's mobile subscribers were at 461.2 million. Bharti Airtel lost 1.14

million users during the month, taking its subscriber base to 384.3 million.

Vodafone Idea continued its trend of subscribers loss. The company lost 1.5 million

users during the month, taking its base to 208.9 million.

Overall, the mobile subscribers base fell by 1.76 million to 1.148 billion in November, according to Trai data. Jio's market share was at 40.15%, Airtel was at 33.45%, followed by Vodafone Idea at 18.19% and BSNL at 8.03%.

According to data, active subscribers base accounted for 92.3% of the total wireless subscribers.

The subscriber base fell by 6 million in November to 1.06 billion. Among the operators, Airtel's subscribers base fell by 3 million to 380 million, whereas Jio's active base fell by 1.12 million to 447 million.

Vodafone Idea's active user base was at 176.9 million, down by 1.9 million during the month.

Fixed wireless subscribers grew 574% in November to 5.16 million.

IN BRIEF



BPCL's Q3 consolidated net profit rises 20% to ₹3,806 cr.

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) reported a 20% growth in consolidated net profit to ₹3,806 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2024, compared with ₹3,181 crore in the year-earlier period. Revenue from operations during the quarter, however, decreased to ₹1,27,551 crore from ₹1,29,585 crore in the year earlier. The BPCL board has also declared an interim dividend of 75 per equity share of a face value of ₹10 each.

Reliance Consumer Products Ltd. acquires SIL Foods

Reliance Consumer Products Ltd. (RCPL) announced the acquisition of Mumbai-based SIL Foods for an undisclosed sum. The acquisition was part of RCPL's broader strategy to revitalize and modernize India's most beloved heritage brands, it said. Ajay Marwaha, SIL Foods' managing director said, RCPL will infuse new life into the brand by expanding its reach. The firm produces fruit jams, soups, chutneys, sauces, ginger garlic paste, and other products.

SEBI foists consultation paper on sachetisation of MFs

To increase the reach and facilitate participation from low-income groups in mutual funds, SEBI on Wednesday floated a consultation paper on 'sachetisation' of mutual funds. The regulator announced a sachetised mutual fund product - small ticket systematic investment plan (SIP) of ₹250. Further, smaller entry sizes can be offered in any scheme except for debt schemes, sectoral and thematic schemes, small cap and mid-cap schemes under equity schemes category.

Ashwini Vaishnav steers Davos parleys



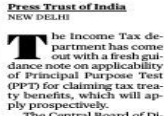
NEW DELHI: Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav has participated in a series of strategic meetings in Switzerland, underlining India's commitment to fostering international collaboration and embracing innovative technologies in the railway sector, and also made a presentation on the Indian semiconductor ecosystem. Before heading for the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2025 in Davos, Mr. Vaishnav on Tuesday held several meetings, including one with the Telangana Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu who has always guided us to benchmark our efforts to the global bests. Today's visit is also in this direction. There is a lot of interest around the world for what is made in India products.

A presentation showcasing latest advancements in infrastructure diagnostics was held by the Swiss Federal Railways. Mr. Vaishnav also engaged with Swiss experts to understand the cutting-edge technologies that can bolster operational efficiency and safety within the Indian Railways system. This was followed by a meeting with leading railway sector "Small and Medium Enterprises", including Rhombus, Seira AG, Seletron, Ucentrics, Augment, and others.

Another key meeting was with Stadler Rail Management and a visit to the state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in multiplex greentech. Stadler Rail's expertise in producing double-decker multiple unit trains. Mr. Vaishnav also attended the opening dinner hosted by the Board of

Tax avoidance treaties: India sets new norms for claiming benefits

The Central Board of Direct Taxes has issued fresh guidelines for applying the Principal Purpose Test (PPT) provisions under Double Tax Avoidance Agreements or DTAA's, deals with Cyprus, Mauritius and Singapore to remain outside for now



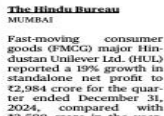
Press Trust of India NEW DELHI: The Income Tax department has come out with a fresh guidance note on application of Principal Purpose Test (PPT) for claiming tax treaty benefits, which will apply prospectively.



DTAA's signed with these three nations. Crucially, it establishes the primacy of the grandfathering over featuring in some treaties, namely Cyprus, Mauritius and Singapore. The circular provides such treaty-specific bilateral commitments and carves them out of the purview of the PPT provisions.

April 1, 2025," he said. Nangia Andersen LLP partner Vishvas Panjari said as per the new PPT provisions shall apply prospectively and would also not be applicable in cases where India has entered into treaty-specific bilateral commitments in the form of grandfathering. "The guidelines nudge tax authorities to refer to BEPS Action Plan 6 as well as UN Model Tax Convention for supplementary source of guidance while deciding on invocation and application of PPT provisions," Mr. Panjari added.

Demand sign: HUL volumes up 2% in Q3



The Hindu Bureau MUMBAI: Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) major Hindustan Unilever Ltd. (HUL) reported a 19% growth in standalone net profit to ₹2,984 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2024, compared with ₹2,509 crore in the year-earlier period.



whilst maintaining healthy margins," CEO and MD Rohit Jawa said. During the quarter, the company's Home Care business witnessed an underlying sales growth (USG) of 6%, led by high-single digit UVG in fabric wash and household care.

HDFC Bank's Q3 net profit rises 2% to ₹16,736 crore



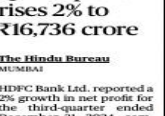
HDFC Bank Ltd. reported a 2% growth in net profit for the third-quarter ended December 31, 2024, compared with ₹16,373 crore in a year-ago period. Profit after tax, adjusted for credit and mark-to-market gains, prior year one-off provisions, and prior year tax credits, grew 13.6% over the quarter ended December 31, 2023, the private sector lender said.

H-IBs grow critical skills gap in U.S.: Nasscom



Nasscom on Wednesday said H-IBs have nothing to do with immigration issues and instead fill critical skills gap in the U.S., as the apex industry body asserted technology will be the "lynchpin" of U.S. economic growth, triggering continued need for 'win-win partnerships' between companies on both sides.

'India's maritime sector needs investment of \$1 trillion by 2047'



Ports, Shipping & Waterways said India's maritime sector has become cornerstone of the country's economic resurgence and investment of \$1 trillion would increase stocks to 10,000 MT per annum by 2047.

Reliance Consumer Products Ltd. acquires SIL Foods



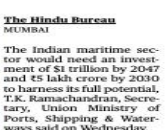
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To increase the reach and facilitate participation from low-income groups in mutual funds, SEBI on Wednesday floated a consultation paper on 'sachetisation' of mutual funds. The regulator announced a sachetised mutual fund product - small ticket systematic investment plan (SIP) of ₹250. Further, smaller entry sizes can be offered in any scheme except for debt schemes, sectoral and thematic schemes, small cap and mid-cap schemes under equity schemes category.

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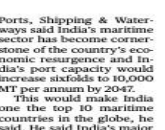
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Tax avoidance treaties: India sets new norms for claiming benefits

The Central Board of Direct Taxes has issued fresh guidelines for applying the Principal Purpose Test (PPT) provisions under Double Tax Avoidance Agreements or DTAA; deals with Cyprus, Mauritius and Singapore to remain outside for now

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

The Income Tax department has come out with a fresh guidance note on applicability of Principal Purpose Test (PPT) for claiming tax treaty benefits, which will apply prospectively.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) in its guidance note on PPT also clarified the grandfathering provisions under the India-Cyprus Double Tax Avoidance Agreement (DTAA), and the similar pacts with Mauritius and



Singapore would stay outside the purview of the new PPT provisions. India has made certain treaty-specific bilateral commitments in the form of grandfathering provisions in the

DTAAs signed with these three nations.

“These commitments, as reflected in the bilaterally agreed object and purpose of such grandfathering provisions, are not intended to interact with the PPT provision as such,” the CBDT said.

The grandfathering provision in the treaties would be governed by the specific provisions specified in the respective DTAA.

Deloitte India partner, Rohinton Sidhwa said the circular clarifies various aspects for interpreting the PPT that now featured in

most Indian tax DTAA.

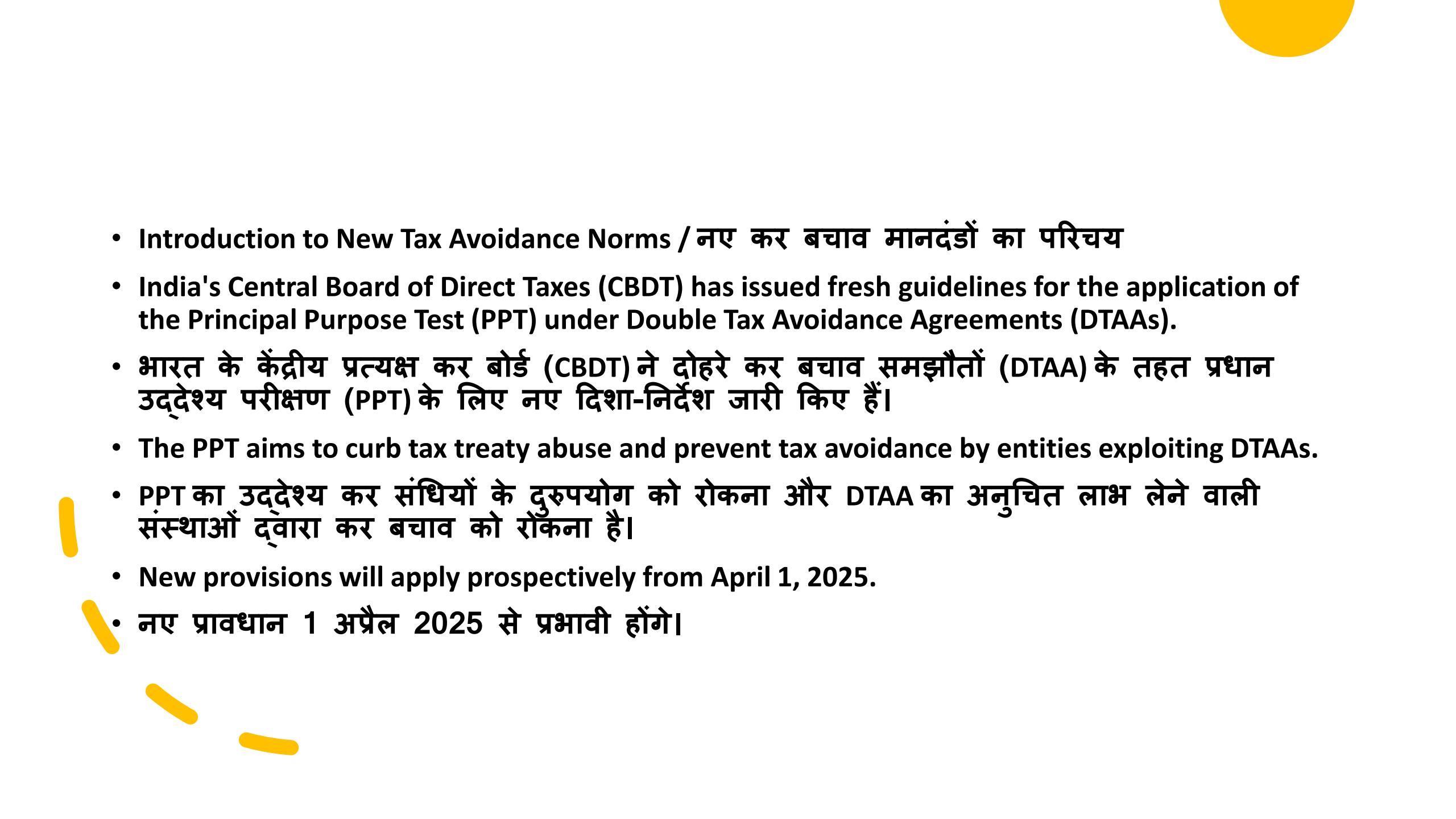
Crucially, it establishes the primacy of the grandfathering article featuring in some treaties, namely Cyprus, Mauritius and Singapore. The circular protects such treaty-specific bilateral commitments and carves them out of the purview of the PPT provisions.

“This was a grey area when the new protocol was made public for the India Mauritius treaty. With this clarification, there is a likelihood that the protocol would be notified and go into effect in the coming financial year beginning

April 1, 2025,” he said.

Nangia Andersen LLP partner Vishwas Panjjar said as per the note, PPT provisions shall apply prospectively and would also not be applicable in cases where India has entered into treaty-specific bilateral commitments in the form of grandfathering.

“The guidelines nudge tax authorities to refer to BEPS Action Plan 6 as well as UN Model Tax Convention for supplementary source of guidance while deciding on invocation and application of PPT provisions,” Mr. Panjjar added.


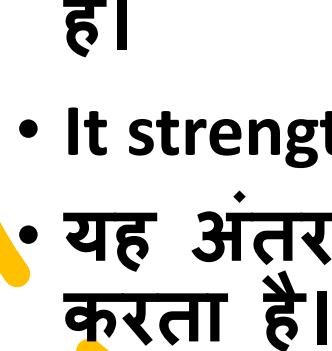
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- Introduction to New Tax Avoidance Norms / नए कर बचाव मानदंडों का परिचय
 - India's Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has issued fresh guidelines for the application of the Principal Purpose Test (PPT) under Double Tax Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs).
 - भारत के केंद्रीय प्रत्यक्ष कर बोर्ड (CBDT) ने दोहरे कर बचाव समझौतों (DTAA) के तहत प्रधान उद्देश्य परीक्षण (PPT) के लिए नए दिशा-निर्देश जारी किए हैं।
 - The PPT aims to curb tax treaty abuse and prevent tax avoidance by entities exploiting DTAAs.
 - PPT का उद्देश्य कर संधियों के दुरुपयोग को रोकना और DTAA का अनुचित लाभ लेने वाली संस्थाओं द्वारा कर बचाव को रोकना है।
 - New provisions will apply prospectively from April 1, 2025.
 - नए प्रावधान 1 अप्रैल 2025 से प्रभावी होंगे।


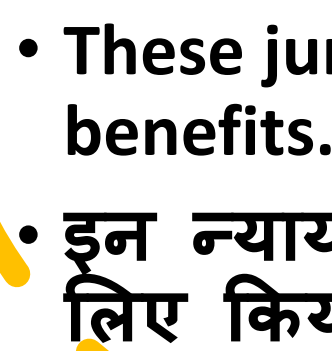
Principal Purpose Test (PPT) under Double Tax Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs)



The **Principal Purpose Test (PPT)** is an anti-abuse provision introduced under the **Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS)** framework by the **OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)** and the **G20**.

It aims to prevent the misuse of **Double Tax Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs)** by entities that engage in tax treaty shopping or artificial tax structuring to gain **unjust tax benefits**.

- Exemptions for Certain Countries / कुछ देशों के लिए छूट
- CBDT clarified that the "grandfathering provisions" in the India-Cyprus, India-Mauritius, and India-Singapore DTAA's will not be affected by the PPT provisions.
- CBDT ने स्पष्ट किया कि भारत-साइप्रस, भारत-मॉरीशस और भारत-सिंगापुर DTAA में "ग्रैंडफादरिंग प्रावधान" PPT प्रावधानों से प्रभावित नहीं होंगे।
- This decision honors India's treaty-specific bilateral commitments with these countries.
- यह निर्णय इन देशों के साथ भारत की संधि-विशिष्ट द्विपक्षीय प्रतिबद्धताओं का सम्मान करता है।


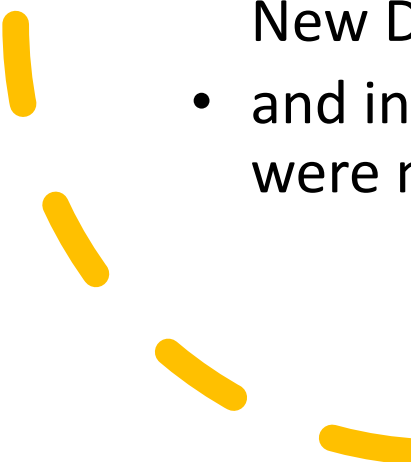
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- **Political Context / राजनीतिक संदर्भ**
 - **The move aligns India's tax policies with global anti-tax avoidance frameworks like BEPS (Base Erosion and Profit Shifting).**
 - **यह कदम भारत की कर नीतियों को BEPS (बेस इरोजन एंड प्रॉफिट शिफ्टिंग) जैसे वैश्विक कर बचाव विरोधी ढांचे के साथ संरेखित करता है।**
 - **It strengthens India's negotiating power in international tax treaties.**
 - **यह अंतरराष्ट्रीय कर संधियों में भारत की वार्ता शक्ति को मजबूत करता है।**
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- **Geographical Context / भौगोलिक संदर्भ**
 - **Mauritius, Singapore, and Cyprus are common routes for foreign investments into India.**
 - **मॉरीशस, सिंगापर और साइप्रस भारत में विदेशी निवेश के लिए सामान्य मार्ग हैं।**
 - **These jurisdictions are frequently used for tax structuring and treaty benefits.**
 - **इन न्यायक्षेत्रों का उपयोग अक्सर कर संरचना और संधि लाभों के लिए किया जाता है।**
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- **Economic Context / आर्थिक संदर्भ**
 - **Ensuring proper implementation of tax treaties can boost India's foreign direct investment (FDI) while preventing tax evasion.**
 - **कर संधियों के उचित कार्यान्वयन से भारत में प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (FDI) बढ़ सकता है और कर चोरी को रोका जा सकता है।**
 - **India is trying to balance investor confidence while tightening tax enforcement.**
 - **भारत निवेशकों के विश्वास को बनाए रखते हुए कर प्रवर्तन को सख्त करने की कोशिश कर रहा है।**
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Parakram Diwas



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- Parakram Diwas is observed annually on 23rd January to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose**.
 - **About**
 - The first Parakram Diwas was held at **Victoria Memorial in Kolkata**.
 - The year 2022 saw the unveiling of a hologram statue of Netaji at India Gate, New Delhi;
 - and in 2023, 21 unnamed islands in the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago were named after the 21 Param Vir Chakra Awardees.
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He was the **first person** to call Mahatma Gandhi “**Father of the Nation**”, in his address from Singapore.

Indian National Congress:


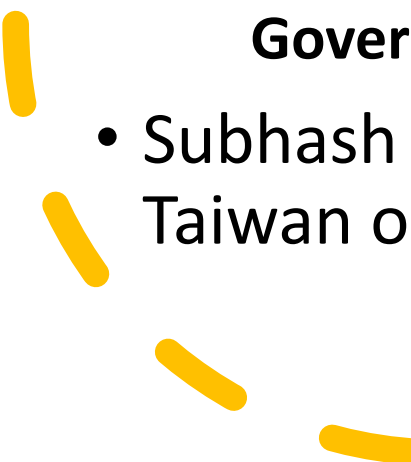
- He was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress twice, in **1938 and 1939**.
- Ideological differences with Mahatma Gandhi led to his resignation and the formation of the **Forward Bloc**, a political faction committed to radical change.



Azad Hind Radio 1942: He established **Azad Hind Radio in Germany** to reach out to Indians and spread his vision of independence.

- **He coined several patriotic slogans**, including “Jai Hind,” “Dilli Chalo” (On to Delhi), and “Give me blood, and I will give you freedom”.

Formation of Indian National Army (INA): In 1942, he formed the INA with the help of Japanese forces.


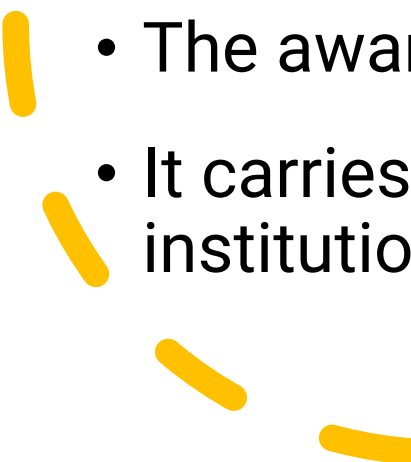
- The INA was an armed force aimed at securing India’s independence through military action against British rule.

- 
- **Azad Hind Government:** In **1943**, Subhash Chandra Bose renamed the Andaman and Nicobar Islands as “Shaheed” (Martyr) and “Swaraj” (Self-Rule) during his leadership of the Azad Hind Government.
 - This was a symbolic gesture of asserting India’s sovereignty against British rule.
 - On October 21, 1943, Netaji declared the **establishment of the Provisional Government of Free India (Azad Hind Sarkar)**.
 - Subhash Chandra Bose reportedly passed away in a plane crash in Taiwan on August 18, 1945, from severe burn injuries.
- 

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- **Azad Hind Government:** In October 1943, Bose formed the **Provisional Government of Azad Hind** in Singapore. The headquarters moved to Rangoon in January 1944.
 - It was recognized by **9 countries** namely **Japan, Germany, Italy, Croatia, Burma, Thailand, Philippines, Manchuria, and the Republic of China** (under Wang Jingwei).
 - **INA Women's Regiment:** Bose also created the **Rani of Jhansi Regiment**, which was composed of women who fought alongside men in the struggle for independence.
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Born	Subhas Chandra Bose 23 January 1897 Cuttack, Bengal Presidency, British India
Died	18 August 1945 (aged 48) ^{[4][5]} Taihoku, Japanese Taiwan
Cause of death	Third-degree burns from aircrash ^[5]
Resting place	Renkō-ji, Tokyo, Japan
Political party	Indian National Congress All India Forward Bloc
Spouse(s)	Emilie Schenkl (m. 1937) (secretly married without ceremony or witnesses, unacknowledged publicly by Bose) ^[6]
Children	Anita Bose Pfaff
Parents	Janakinath Bose (father) Prabhabati Bose (mother)
Education	Baptist Mission's Protestant European School, Cuttack, 1902–09 ^[7] Ravenshaw Collegiate School, Cuttack, 1909–12 ^[8] Presidency College, Calcutta, 1912–15 February 1916 ^{[e][f]} Scottish Church College, Calcutta, 20 July 1917–1919 Fitzwilliam Hall, Non- Collegiate Students Board, Cambridge, 1919–21. ^{[11][g]}
Alma mater	University of Calcutta (B.A., Philosophy, 1919) University of Cambridge (B.A. Mental and Moral Sciences Tripos, 1921. ^[11])



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- Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar
 - The annual **Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar** has been instituted in **2018** to recognize and honour the **invaluable contribution and selfless service** rendered by **individuals and organisations** in India in the field of **disaster management**.
 - The award is announced every year on **23rd January**.
 - It carries a **cash prize of Rs 51 lakh** and a **certificate** in case of an institution and **Rs 5 lakh and a certificate** in case of an individual.
- 

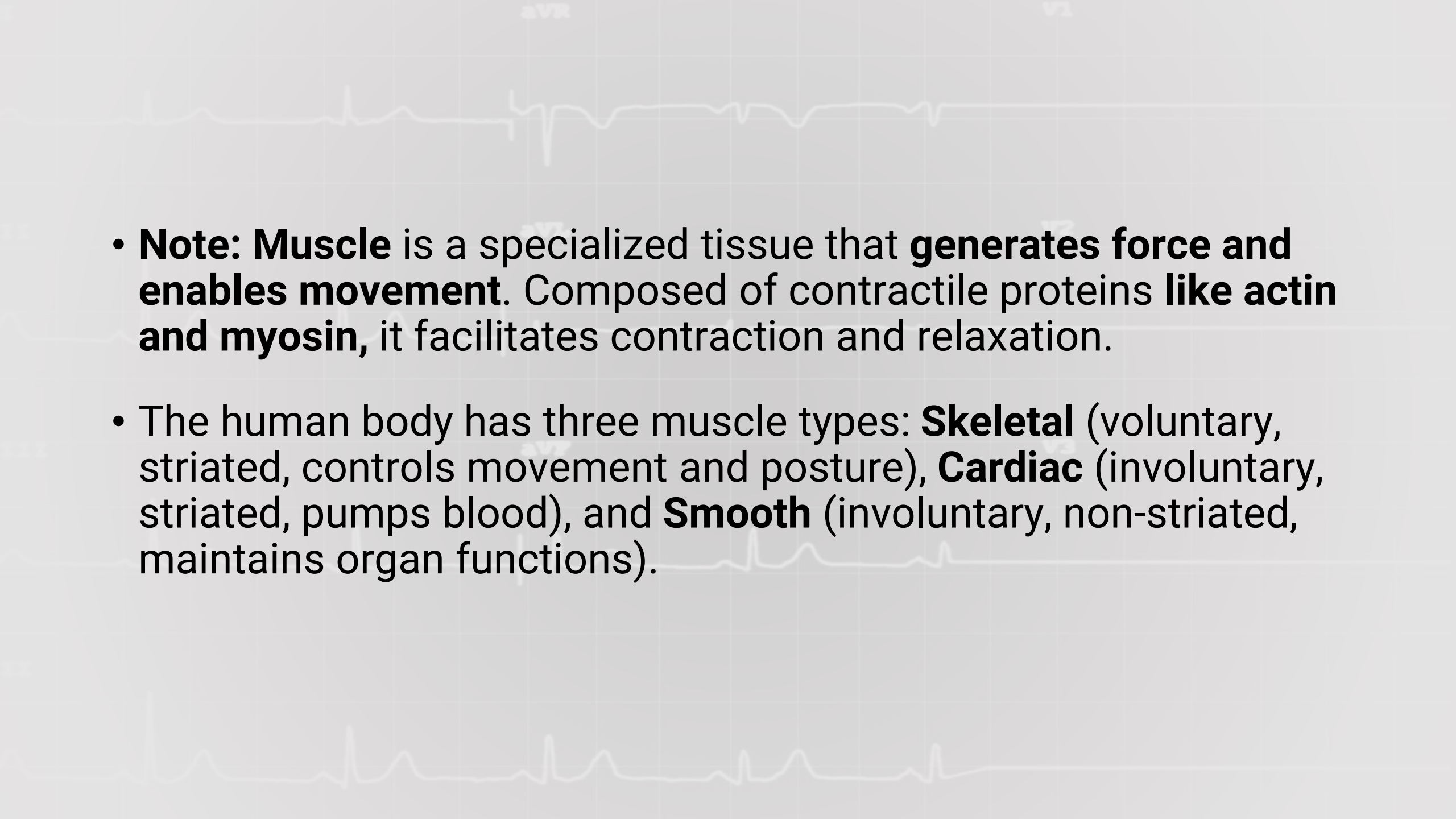
- **During the Indian Freedom Struggle, who of the following raised an army called 'Free Indian Legion'?(2008)**
- (a) Lala Hardayal
- (b) Rashbehari Bose
- (c) Subhas Chandra Bose
- (d) V.D. Savarkar


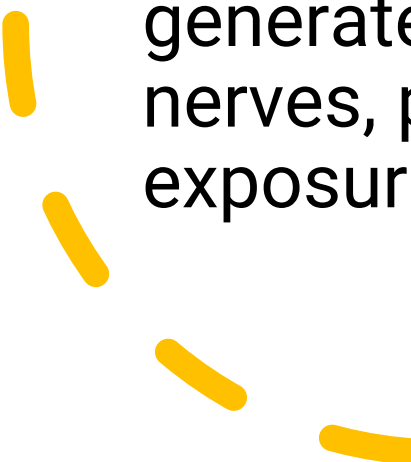




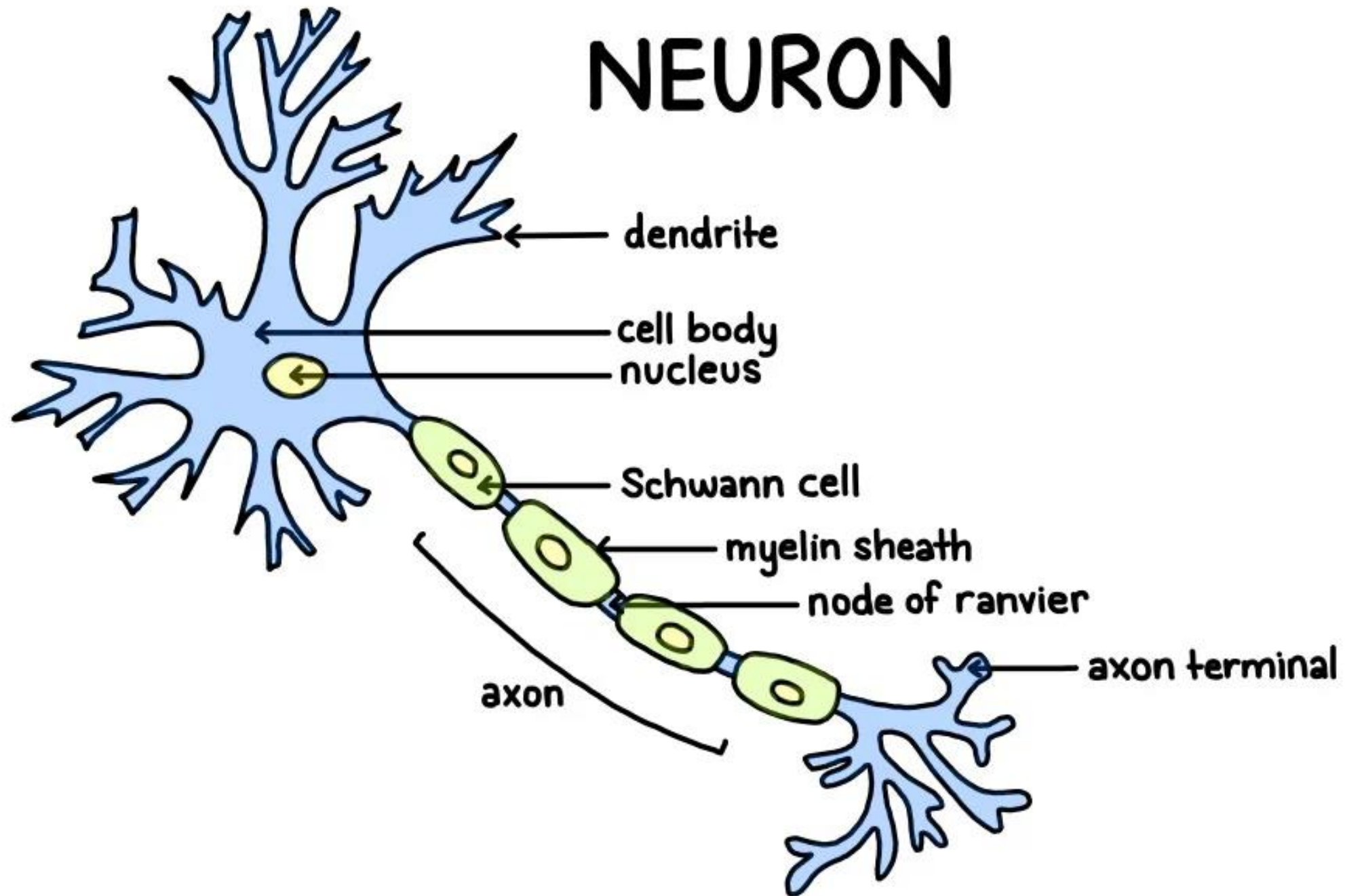
Exercise Stimulates Neuronal Growth

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- A study by the *Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)* has revealed that exercise **not only strengthens muscles** but also **stimulates neuron growth** through biochemical and physical mechanisms.
- 

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- The background of the slide features a faint, light-colored ECG (heart rate) tracing on a grid. The tracing shows several cardiac cycles with distinct P waves, QRS complexes, and T waves. Labels 'aVR' and 'V1' are visible at the top of the grid, and 'V2' is visible at the bottom. The overall aesthetic is clean and medical.
- **Note: Muscle** is a specialized tissue that **generates force and enables movement**. Composed of contractile proteins **like actin and myosin**, it facilitates contraction and relaxation.
 - The human body has three muscle types: **Skeletal** (voluntary, striated, controls movement and posture), **Cardiac** (involuntary, striated, pumps blood), and **Smooth** (involuntary, non-striated, maintains organ functions).

- 
- **Role of Myokines:** Exercise increases the secretion of **myokines, a biochemical compound** released by muscles. Which significantly enhance **neuronal growth** (4x faster) and improve **neural maturity** and functional abilities.
 - **Physical Stress and Neuronal Growth:** Physical forces generated during muscle contraction mechanically stimulate nerves, promoting neuronal growth comparable to myokine exposure.
- 

NEURON



NEUROTRANSMITTERS

ADRENALINE fight or flight

produced in stressful situations. Increases heart rate and blood flow, leading to physical boost and heightened awareness.

GABA calming

Calms firing nerves in the central nervous system. High levels improve focus, low levels cause anxiety. Also contributes to motor control and vision.

NORADRENALINE concentration

affects attention and responding actions in the brain. Contracts blood vessels, increasing blood flow.

ACETYLCHOLINE learning

Involved in thought, learning and memory. Activates muscle action in the body. Also associated with attention and awakening.

DOPAMINE pleasure

feelings of pleasure, also addiction, movement and motivation. People repeat behaviors that lead to dopamine release.

GLUTAMATE memory

Most common neurotransmitter. Involved in learning and memory, regulates development and creation of nerve contacts.


SEROTONIN mood

contributes to well-being and happiness. Helps sleep cycle and digestive system regulation. Affected by exercise and light exposure.


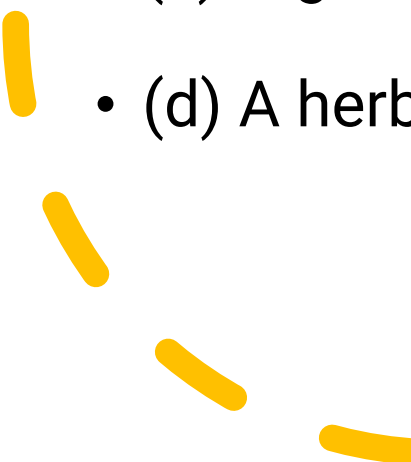
ENDORPHINS euphoria

Released during exercise, excitement and sex, producing well-being and euphoria, reducing pain

Roles of Different Neurotransmitters

Some Neurotransmitters and Their Functions		
Neurotransmitter	Function	Problems Caused by Imbalances
Serotonin	Affects mood, hunger, sleep, and arousal	Undersupply linked to depression; some antidepressant drugs raise serotonin levels
Dopamine	Influences movement, learning, attention, and emotion	Oversupply linked to schizophrenia; undersupply linked to tremors and decreased mobility in Parkinson's disease and ADHD
Acetylcholine (ACh)	Enables muscle action, learning, and memory	ACh-producing neurons deteriorate as Alzheimer's disease progresses
Norepinephrine	Helps control alertness and arousal	Undersupply can depress mood and cause ADHD-like attention problems
GABA gamma-aminobutyric acid	A major inhibitory neurotransmitter	Undersupply linked to seizures, tremors, and insomnia
	A major excitatory neurotransmitter; involved in memory	Oversupply can overstimulate the brain, producing migraines or seizures; this is why some people avoid MSG (monosodium glutamate) in food

Nutrients - Natural Neurotransmitter Support For Brain Balance
Affects Serotonin, Dopamine and Norepinephrine
Emotional Stability & Mental Clarity - www.SNAPalways.com

- 
- What is the Cas9 protein that is often mentioned in the news? (2019)
 - (a) A molecular scissors used in targeted gene editing
 - (b) A biosensor used in the accurate detection of pathogens in patients
 - (c) A gene that makes plants pest-resistant
 - (d) A herbicidal substance synthesised in genetically modified crops
- 

US withdrawal from WHO



- Recently, the United States, under President Donald Trump, has signed an executive order to withdraw from WHO, citing reasons such as mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of reforms within the organization.



About WHO: Aim and Functions

Aims

- Ensure **universal health coverage** and promote health equity.
- Strengthen disease **prevention and control** worldwide.
- Enhance global preparedness and response to health emergencies.

Functions

- Set global health **standards and guidelines**.
- Monitor **emerging health issues** and coordinate responses.
- Provide **technical assistance** to countries for capacity building.
- Facilitate **health research** and policy development.

-
- **WHO's Role in Global Health:**
 - **Global Coordination:**
 - Leads international efforts in combating pandemics, such as **COVID-19** and **Ebola**.
 - Collaborates with governments, NGOs, and private entities to strengthen healthcare systems.
 - **Disease Eradication:** Played a key role in eradicating **smallpox** and reducing **polio cases** by 99%.
 - **Capacity Building:** Assists low- and middle-income countries in improving **health infrastructure**, access to medicines, and training healthcare workers.
 - **Health Policy Advocacy:** Advocates for funding and policies addressing **non-communicable diseases**, **mental health**, and **nutrition improvement**.



- **Key Provisions in the Executive Order:**

- Cease funding and resources to WHO.
- Recall all US personnel working with the organization.
- Seek alternative international partnerships for health initiatives.

Process to Leave WHO:

The WHO Constitution does not explicitly outline a withdrawal process.

However, the US Congress established conditions in 1948 allowing withdrawal with a **one-year notice** and payment of any outstanding financial commitments.

Impact of USA's Exit:

On WHO:

- **Financial Strain**
 - US withdrawal could lead to a loss of approximately **20% of WHO's funding**.
 - Affects ongoing health programs globally, particularly in disease eradication and pandemic preparedness.
- **Expertise Gap**
 - Loss of collaboration with US agencies like **CDC** reduces WHO's effectiveness in health surveillance.



- On India:

- Health Programmes

- Reduced WHO support for India's programs on **tuberculosis, malaria, HIV, and maternal health**.
- Challenges in implementing WHO guidelines for vaccine coverage and disease prevention.

- Collaborative Research

- Loss of expertise impacts India's capacity-building partnerships with WHO.
- 



Takers, Not Makers Report

TAKERS

NOT MAKERS

The unjust poverty and
unearned wealth of colonialism



- The Oxfam International report, titled Takers, Not Makers, highlights the wealth extracted from India during British colonial rule, emphasizing the enduring economic and social inequalities shaped by colonial exploitation.

-
- Focuses on wealth extraction during colonial rule, particularly by Britain, and its impact on global inequality.
 - Highlights modern parallels of exploitation by multinational corporations.
 - **Data Insights:**
 - **\$64.82 trillion extracted** from India by Britain (1765–1900), adjusted for today's value.
 - **33.8 trillion (52%)** enriched the UK's richest 10%; 32% benefited the middle class.
 - India's **industrial output share** fell from **25% (1750)** to **2% (1900)** due to protectionist policies targeting Asian textiles.
 - Systemic exploitation persists, with wages in the **Global South 87–95% lower** than in the Global North.

About Oxfam:

Established in: 1942 as the **Oxford Committee for Famine Relief**, during World War II.

Headquarters: Oxford, United Kingdom.

Aim: To **alleviate global poverty** and address inequalities through advocacy, development programs, and humanitarian aid.

Functions:

- Operates in **79 countries** across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas.
- Focuses on **education, health, public services, and inequality reduction**.
- Campaigns against issues like **tax evasion, climate change, and gender disparity**.

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

- What key minerals has China restricted in its new export controls?
- चीन ने अपने नए निर्यात नियंत्रण में किन प्रमुख खनिजों पर प्रतिबंध लगाया है?
- A. Gold, Silver, and Copper / सोना, चांदी और तांबा
- B. Uranium, Zinc, and Nickel / यूरेनियम, जिंक और निकेल
- C. Tungsten, Lithium, Magnesium, and Beryllium / टंगस्टन, लिथियम, मैग्नीशियम और बेरीलियम
- D. Platinum, Palladium, and Rhodium / प्लेटिनम, पैलेडियम और रोडियम

- Why are these restricted minerals critical for global industries?
- ये प्रतिबंधित खनिज वैश्विक उद्योगों के लिए क्यों महत्वपूर्ण हैं?
- A. Used in jewelry making / आभूषण निर्माण में उपयोग किया जाता है
- B. Essential for semiconductors, aerospace, and battery industries / अर्धचालक, एयरोस्पेस और बैटरी उद्योगों के लिए आवश्यक
- C. Required for currency minting / मुद्रा निर्माण के लिए आवश्यक
- D. Mainly used in agriculture fertilizers / मुख्य रूप से कृषि उर्वरकों में उपयोग किया जाता है

- What was the name of the law India passed to boost critical mineral exploration?
- भारत ने महत्वपूर्ण खनिज अन्वेषण को बढ़ावा देने के लिए कौन सा कानून पारित किया?
- A. Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 / खान और खनिज (विकास और विनियमन) संशोधन अधिनियम, 2023
- B. National Mining Act, 2024 / राष्ट्रीय खनन अधिनियम, 2024
- C. Indian Critical Minerals Act, 2025 / भारतीय महत्वपूर्ण खनिज अधिनियम, 2025
- D. Strategic Resources Act, 2023 / सामरिक संसाधन अधिनियम, 2023

- Which tax reform was introduced under India's new Double Tax Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) rules?
- भारत के नए दोहरे कर बचाव समझौते (DTAA) नियमों के तहत कौन सा कर सुधार पेश किया गया?
- A. Principal Purpose Test (PPT) / प्रधान उद्देश्य परीक्षण (PPT)
B. Direct Corporate Tax Credit (DCTC) / प्रत्यक्ष कॉर्पोरेट कर क्रेडिट (DCTC)
C. Automatic Tax Deduction Mechanism / स्वचालित कर कटौती तंत्र
D. International Tax Fairness Act / अंतर्राष्ट्रीय कर निष्पक्षता अधिनियम

- Which countries were granted exemptions under India's DTAA tax reforms?
- भारत के DTAA कर सुधारों के तहत किन देशों को छूट दी गई?
- A. USA, China, and Japan / अमेरिका, चीन और जापान
- B. Mauritius, Singapore, and Cyprus / मॉरीशस, सिंगापुर और साइप्रस
- C. Germany, France, and Russia / जर्मनी, फ्रांस और रूस
- D. UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Brazil / यूएई, सऊदी अरब और ब्राजील

- What is celebrated on Parakram Diwas in India?
- भारत में पराक्रम दिवस किसकी याद में मनाया जाता है?
- A. Birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel / सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल की जयंती
- B. Birth anniversary of Subhas Chandra Bose / सुभाष चंद्र बोस की जयंती
- C. India's victory in the 1971 war / 1971 के युद्ध में भारत की विजय
- D. Anniversary of India's first nuclear test / भारत के पहले परमाणु परीक्षण की वर्षगांठ

- Which regiment was formed by Subhas Chandra Bose in the Indian National Army (INA)?
- भारतीय राष्ट्रीय सेना (INA) में सुभाष चंद्र बोस द्वारा कौन सा रेजिमेंट बनाया गया था?
- A. Netaji Infantry Battalion / नेताजी इन्फैंटी बटालियन
- B. Rani of Jhansi Regiment / रानी झांसी रेजिमेंट
- C. Swaraj Special Forces / स्वराज स्पेशल फोर्स
- D. Azad Hind Artillery Corps / आजाद हिंद आर्टिलरी कोर

- What was the main focus of the Oxfam report "Takers, Not Makers"?
- ऑक्सफैम रिपोर्ट "Takers, Not Makers" का मुख्य फोकस क्या था?
- A. Impact of British colonial rule on Indian economy / ब्रिटिश औपनिवेशिक शासन का भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था पर प्रभाव
- B. Effects of global climate change on developing nations / विकासशील देशों पर वैश्विक जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रभाव
- C. Role of technology in modern economic disparity / आधुनिक आर्थिक असमानता में प्रौद्योगिकी की भूमिका
- D. Economic policies of post-independence India / स्वतंत्रता के बाद की भारत की आर्थिक नीतियां

- What is the estimated wealth extracted from India by Britain as per the Oxfam report?
- ऑक्सफैम रिपोर्ट के अनुसार ब्रिटेन द्वारा भारत से कितना धन निकाला गया था?
- A. \$32 trillion
- B. \$45 trillion
- C. \$64.82 trillion
- D. \$80 trillion

- Why did the US withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO)?
- अमेरिका ने विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन (WHO) से हटने का निर्णय क्यों लिया?
- A. Alleged mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic / COVID-19 महामारी के कप्रबंधन का आरोप
- B. WHO's funding policies favoring China / WHO की चीन को प्राथमिकता देने वाली वित्त पोषण नीतियाँ
- C. WHO's inefficiency in global health reforms / वैश्विक स्वास्थ्य सुधारों में WHO की अक्षमता
- D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी

Word of the day

Parlay:

a series of wagers in which the winnings from one wager is used as a stake for the subsequent wagers; place a bet on

Synonyms: double up

Usage: *She hoped to parlay her football skills into a college scholarship.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/parlaypro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /'pɑ:lɛɪ/

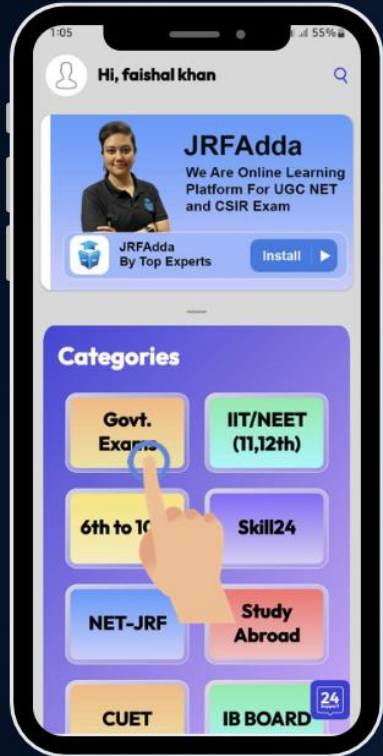
Fun fact



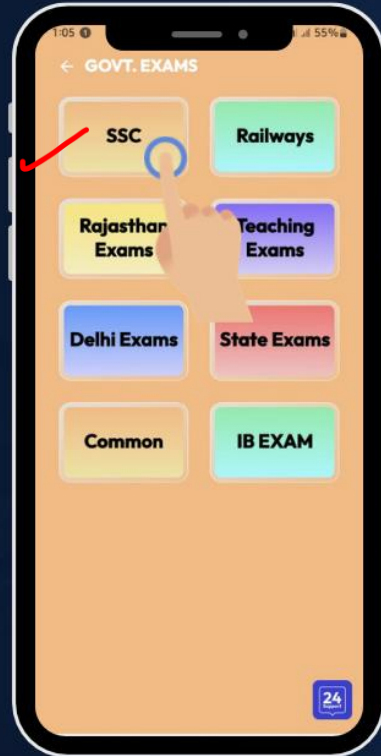
A scenic landscape featuring a calm body of water in the foreground, reflecting the sky and surrounding mountains. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with scattered white clouds. The mountains are dark and rugged, with some peaks catching the light of the setting or rising sun. In the distance, a small cluster of white buildings is visible on the right side of the lake. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

No Rivers or Mountains
This country no rivers, mountains, or
forests

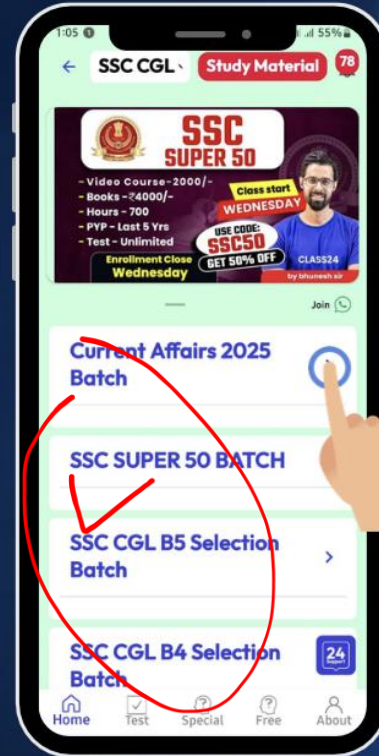
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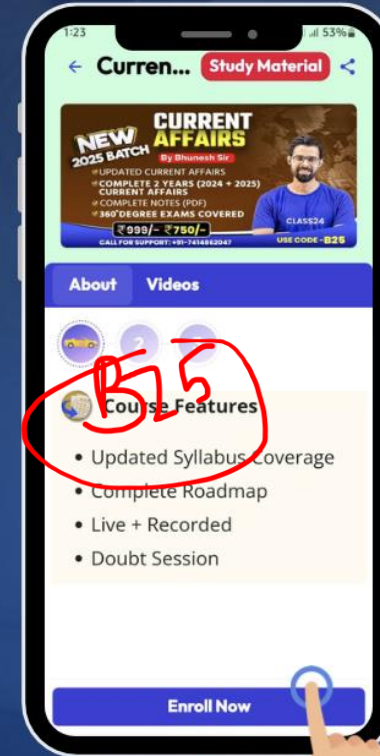
Step 2




Step 3



Step 4





Thank you
guys.
