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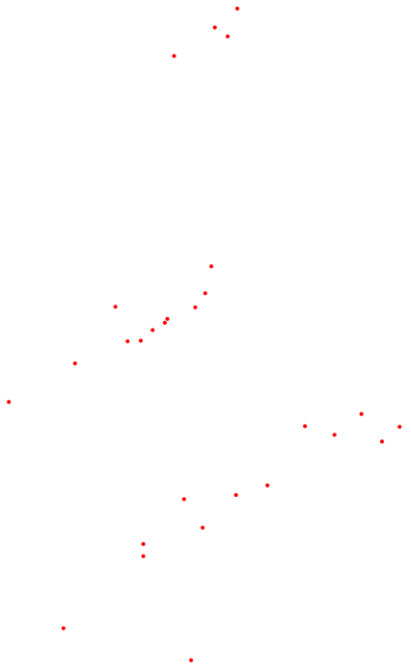


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10 MCQ from the session

According to the Constitution of India, which list does “betting and gambling” fall under?

भारतीय संविधान के अनुसार "सट्टेबाज़ी और जुआ" किस सूची में आते हैं?

- A. Union List
- B. Concurrent List
- C. State List
- D. Central Executive List

. What is the theme of the film “Santosh” by Sandhya Suri?

संध्या सूरी की फिल्म “संतोष” का मुख्य विषय क्या है?

- A. Partition trauma
- B. Women’s empowerment through entrepreneurship
- C. Caste and gender-based violence in policing
- D. Religious conflict

**Which company is delivering 99 F404-IN20 jet engines to HAL for Tejas Mk1A?**

- **Tejas Mk1A के लिए HAL को 99 F404-IN20 जेट इंजन कौन सी कंपनी दे रही है?**
  - A. Rolls Royce
  - B. Boeing
  - C. GE Aerospace
  - D. Safran



**What is the significance of the Tejas Mk1A project for India?**

- **Tejas Mk1A परियोजना का भारत के लिए क्या महत्व है?**
  - A. Boosts textile exports
  - B. Promotes import of foreign jets
  - C. Enhances indigenous defence manufacturing
  - D. Private jet market expansion

**What is the Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary known for?**

- **भद्र वन्यजीव अभयारण्य किस लिए प्रसिद्ध है?**
  - A. Bengal tigers and Himalayan bears
  - B. Elephants and largest teak tree in Karnataka
  - C. Red pandas
  - D. Snow leopards

**What is the key feature of the Signal app used by officials?**

• **Signal ऐप की मुख्य विशेषता क्या है, जिसे अधिकारियों ने उपयोग किया?**

A. GPS tracking

B. End-to-end encryption for secure communication

C. Free video editing

D. Cloud storage

**India is losing nearly what percentage of its GDP annually due to road accidents?**

**• भारत को सड़क दुर्घटनाओं के कारण हर साल अपने GDP का लगभग कितना प्रतिशत नुकसान हो रहा है?**

A. 1%

B. 2%

C. 3%

D. 5%

**What is the purpose of the “Baalpan ki Kavita” initiative?**

• **“बालपन की कविता” पहल का उद्देश्य क्या है?**

A. Promote AI in schools

B. Teach Sanskrit to high schoolers

C. Preserve and promote Indian rhymes in all languages

D. Promote coding from age 5

**Where is India's first indigenously developed MRI scanner being installed?**

- **भारत का पहला स्वदेशी MRI स्कैनर कहां स्थापित किया जा रहा है?**
  - A. PGI Chandigarh
  - B. NIMHANS Bengaluru
  - C. AIIMS New Delhi
  - D. Tata Memorial Mumbai

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**Fuel cost makes up 45% of airfare, says Minister**  
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**JUDICIARY'S DEFINING MOMENT**  
**'Between a rock and hard place'**  
*Solutions to key issues exist without affecting its independence*  
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**SOUTHERN DERRY**  
**Shardul and Pooran mastermind LSG's win**  
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## Opposition slams Centre for 'not responding' to U.S. tariffs

How will govt. tackle the issue, ask Rajya Sabha members; Cong. MP Chidambaram says govt. should clarify its stand | By reducing customs duty, the govt. is actually helping small and medium industries, says FM

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Expressing concern over the "tariff war" looming over the global economy after U.S. President Donald Trump's recent announcements, Opposition members in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday asked the Centre if it had any specific plans to deal with the issue.

The MPs raised the issue during a discussion on the Appropriation and Finance Bills, Senior Congress MP and former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, who initiated the debate on the Bills, urged the Centre to clarify the country's response to Mr. Trump's statement that he would impose reciprocal tariffs on April 2.

He said the Centre should discuss the issue in Parliament or consult the Opposition parties on the matter. "What is the government's response? What is India's response? There has been no statement of policy, no discussion in Parliament, no consultation with Opposition parties. The government is

What is the govt's response? What is India's response? There has been no statement of policy, no discussion in Parliament, no consultation with Opposition parties. The govt. is holding its cards close to its chest, if it has any cards at all."

**P. CHIDAMBARAM**, Congress

We have been doing this from 2023. Steadily, every year, new items are being brought in keeping in mind Armani's requirements of developed India. This is an ongoing process. It has nothing to do with today's global situations

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**, Union Finance Minister

Until the tariff is not implemented, what speech or what mention can anyone make on it. We will be able to talk about it only after it is implemented after April 2

**R.P.N. SINGH**, BJP

addition in industries, it will promote exports, facilitate trade and provide relief for common people," she said.

She maintained that the Finance Bill proposes to remove seven customs tariff rates on industrial goods. "Two tranches of rationalisation of customs rate rationalisation has happened. They have reduced the number of tariff rates from 21 to eight, completely bringing them down. Many Indian exports will now become more com-

holding its cards close to its chest, if it has any cards at all," he said.

**'Trump effect'** Addressing the members' concerns, Union Finance Minister gave a detailed account of the recent reduction in basic customs duties and other tariffs, adding that these were not in response to Mr. Trump's announcements. However, Mr. Chidambaram attributed it to the "Trump effect". Ms. Sitharaman said that by bringing down the

petitive as the cost of imported inputs will be completely reduced," the Minister said.

"Consistently, budget after budget, we are coming up with reduction of duties so that India's aspiration to become a manufacturing hub is supported," she said.

"I heard members saying that the tariff war has started and these things are done as a response to the tariff announcements made by President Trump. No, we have been doing this from 2023. It has nothing to do with today's global situations," Ms. Sitharaman said.

Mr. Chidambaram acknowledged that the Finance Minister had made significant reductions in basic duties. "Thank God, at long last, the government is giving up protectionism. We have screamed from the rooftops that protectionism is not the way to protect the economy. They have reduced the number of tariff rates from 21 to eight, completely bringing them down. Many Indian exports will now become more com-

## Trump imposes 25% tariff on imported cars; affected allies threaten retaliation

Driving imports away: The table shows the shares of expenditure on imports of eight types of cars and trucks imported into the United States in 2022

Reuters  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Wednesday imposed a 25% tariff on imported vehicles, expanding a global trade war and prompting criticism and threats of retaliation from affected U.S. allies.

The new levies on cars and light trucks will take effect on April 3, the day after Mr. Trump plans to announce reciprocal tariffs aimed at the countries responsible for the bulk of the U.S. trade deficit. They come on top of duties already introduced on steel and aluminium, and on goods from Mexico, Canada and China.

The U.S. imported \$474 billion worth of automotive products in 2024, including passenger cars worth \$220 billion, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, Canada and Germany, all of which are U.S. allies, were the biggest suppliers.

**'Bad for businesses'** European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen described the move as "bad for businesses, worse for consumers" while Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney la-

Type	Quantity share
Small cars	34.0%
Mid and large cars	30.2%
Luxury cars	24.5%
Small SUVs	46.0%
Mid and large SUVs	24.2%
SUVs	33.9%
Vans	10.8%
Pickups	0%

belled the tariffs a "direct attack" on Canadian workers and said retaliatory measures were being considered.

"We will defend our workers, we will defend our companies, we will defend our country, and we will defend it together," the Canadian Prime Minister said in Ottawa.

Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said Tokyo would put "all options on the table" in dealing with the new tariffs.

Mr. Trump sees tariffs as a tool to raise revenue to offset his promised tax cuts and to revive a long-declining U.S. industrial base.

Many trade experts, however, expect prices to initially rise and demand to fall, hurting a global auto industry that is already reeling from uncertainty caused by Trump's rapid-fire tariff threats and occasional reversals.

"We're going to charge countries for doing business with our country and taking our jobs, taking our wealth, taking a lot of the things that they've been taking over the years," Mr. Trump said on Wednesday. "They've taken us out of our country, friend and foe and frankly, friend has been oftentimes much worse than foe."

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### INSIDE



#### Opposition airs grievances to Lok Sabha Speaker

**NEW DELHI**  
A delegation of Opposition leaders met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday over grievances such as "not allowing" the Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi to speak in the House, failure to elect a Deputy Speaker since 2019, rejection of adjournment motion by the Chair, and reluctance to hold discussions on non-voting issues. » PAGE 5

### Furball's progress



A two-month-old cub, one of the twins born to mother cheetah Veera, at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh. 11

### Macron proposes European army to patrol Ukraine

**PARIS**  
French President Emmanuel Macron said on Wednesday that a proposed European armed force for possible deployment to Ukraine in tandem with an eventual peace deal could "respond" to a Russian attack if Moscow launched one. » PAGE 14

### RLD chief slams U.P. Police's diktat on namaz

**ANIL KUMAR CHAUDHARY**  
The farmers of western Uttar Pradesh who latch on to every social media post of Union Minister and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief Jayant Chaudhary, queried the chabot Gruk on Thursday to understand the dystopian literary context of his cryptic post on policing in UP.

Responding to a news report in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's mouthpiece *Organiser* — "Meerut police to take legal

1984, a novel by English author George Orwell, is a classic cautionary tale, warning of the consequences of totalitarianism, mass surveillance and societal repression.

Outlining the extensive security measures being taken ahead of Id this year, Superintendent of Police Ayaash Vikram Singh had said: "We will not allow prayers on the streets this year. Anyone who attempts to do so will be booked and will face cancellation of their arms license and passport."

In a message to *The Hindu*, Mr. Chaudhary said that people should celebrate the festival with joy and peace, but not create obstruction for anyone.

"But the way the police officer is communicating that we will take away passports is inappropriate. He should have constructive dialogues with community leaders and involve them in such announcements sensitively," the RLD chief said.

The RLD's Baghat MP Raj Kumar Sangwan pointed out that the Eid prayer

### Withdraw the transfer of HC judge: lawyers

**The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI**

Chief justice of India Sanjiv Khanna on Thursday met with office-bearers of the Bar associations of various High Courts, who conveyed their demand to withdraw a proposal to transfer the High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma to the Allahabad High Court.

The delegation consisted of representatives from the Bar associations of the High Courts of Allahabad, Kerala, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Lucknow.

**FULL REPORT**  
» PAGE 4

### Putin to visit India this year: Russian Foreign Minister

**Kallol Bhattacharjee  
NEW DELHI**

Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit India this year, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov announced on Thursday, adding that both sides are making the necessary preparations for the upcoming tour. He also expressed appreciation for India's "balanced" approach towards the Ukraine crisis, while addressing an event in the capital.

"The relations between our countries have a long history. We can say that they have stood the test of time more than once. Today, Russia and India are developing equal cooperation based on sincere, mutual respect and consideration of each other's interests. It is symbolic that Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first bilateral foreign visit after his re-election last year to Russia. Now it is our turn," Mr. Lavrov said.

"Russian President Putin accepted the invitation of the head of the Indian government to visit as the head of the Russian state to the Republic of India in the near future," he added.

This will be Mr. Putin's first trip to India since the Ukraine crisis began in February 2022. He visited India on December 6, 2021 for the 21<sup>st</sup> India-Russia annual summit. In December 2024, Russia confirmed that Mr. Putin had received an invitation from Mr. Modi to visit India early in 2025. Mr. Modi last visited Russia in July 2024 for the 22<sup>nd</sup> India-Russia summit.

This was followed by his participation in the 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS summit in Kazan when he met with the Russian President again.


**'Balanced approach'** India and "personally, Prime Minister Narendra Modi" have maintained a "balanced position on the Ukrainian crisis", seeking a solution "through dialogue", Mr. Lavrov said, addressing an event on "Russia and India: Towards New Bilateral Agenda".

"We fully share this approach and from the very beginning of the crisis we have been talking about Russia's openness to negotiations which should lead to the end of the conflict."

# Driving imports away

The table shows the shares of expenditure on imports of eight types of cars and trucks imported into the United States in 2022

Type	Quantity Share
Small cars	34.6%
Mid and large cars	10.2%
Luxury cars	42.5%
Small CUVs	46.8%
Mid and large CUVs	24.2%
SUVs	13.9%
Vans	10.6%
Pickups	0%

A photograph of a yellow Volkswagen SUV, likely a Tiguan, shown from a front-three-quarter view. Above the car is the white Volkswagen logo on a dark circular background. The background of the image is a gradient of purple and blue.

## Tariff Announcement:

- Former US President Donald Trump announced a **25% tariff** on **imported vehicles** and **auto components**, effective April 3.
- Targets countries like **Mexico, Japan, South Korea, Canada, and Germany** – all major exporters to the US.

## Global Reactions:

- Canada and EU termed it a “**direct attack**” on their industries and warned of **retaliation**.
- Japan indicated it would keep “**all options on the table.**”

## 1.Impact on India:

1. India exported **\$37.11 million** worth of automobiles to the US in 2023.
2. **Jaguar Land Rover (JLR)**, a subsidiary of **Tata Motors**, will be most affected as **30% of its sales** are from the US.
3. **Auto parts exporters** could face margin drops of **1.25%–1.5%**, especially on **engines, powertrains, electrical parts**.

## 2.Sectoral Concerns:

1. India's auto component industry gets **~27% of export revenue from the US**.
2. A call for **bilateral trade agreements** to shield domestic exporters has been made.

Trade Aspect	Details
<b>Total Trade Volume</b>	<p>- <b>2023:</b> India's exports to the U.S. were <b>\$85.5 billion</b>, while U.S. exports to India totaled <b>\$41.4 billion.</b> <small>The Observatory of Economic Complexity</small></p>
<b>Trade Balance</b>	<p>- India maintains a trade surplus with the U.S., exporting more than it imports.</p>
<b>Top Export Categories</b>	<p>- <b>From India to the U.S.:</b> Precious metals, fuels, and electrical machinery. <small>Statista</small></p>
<b>Top Import Categories</b>	<p>- <b>From the U.S. to India:</b> Precious metals, fuels, and electrical machinery.</p>
<b>Trade Dynamics</b>	<p>- The U.S. is one of India's largest trading partners, with significant trade in goods and services.</p>
<b>Recent Developments</b>	<p>- In March 2025, India considered reducing tariffs on over half of U.S. imports worth \$23 billion to protect its \$66 billion exports from impending U.S. reciprocal tariffs set to take effect on April 2. <small>Reuters +2</small></p>

**IN BRIEF**



**Defence Ministry to acquire equipment at ₹2,500 crore**

The Defence Ministry on Thursday signed contracts estimated at ₹2,500 crore for the procurement of the tracked version of the Nag Anti-Tank Missile System (NAMIS) for the Indian Army's mechanised formations, and another with Force Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra for around 5,000 light vehicles for the armed forces. The total cost of the contract for the procurement of tracked NAMIS, developed by the Defence Research and Development Laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, is ₹1,801.34 crore, the MoD said in a statement. NAMIS is a mine with fire-and-forget anti-tank missile and sighting system.

**Implement NRC and identify illegal migrants: Manipur MP**

Sanajaoba Letishamba, Rajya Sabha member from Manipur, on Thursday demanded the identification of illegal immigrants in Manipur, and their deportation by implementing the National Register of Citizens (NRC) to protect the State from demographic imbalance. Raising the issue during the zero hour in the Upper House, the BJP member said that due to the current law and order situation in Manipur, it would not be conducive to make any alterations to the existing electoral constituencies of the State. He further said illegal immigrants were trying to "penetrate the Indian administration", and also "playing electoral politics through illegal infiltration".

**Nadda to hold meet of senior BJP leaders on April 10**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

BJP president and Union Minister J.P. Nadda has called all Chief Ministers of BJP-ruled States, along with the party's State unit presidents and organisational general secretaries, to New Delhi for a meeting on April 10. This comes amid the continuing war for the election of his successor.

Sources in the BJP did not clarify the agenda behind the summoning of these leaders. But the process of completing organisational elections within the party, culminating in the election of its new national president, is continuing apace. Several State unit presidents, including in Uttar Pradesh, are set to be elected which, according to the BJP's organisational set-up, needs to be completed before a new chief is appointed.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Nagpur and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) headquarters, among other events, on March 30, is expected to go a long way in finalising the name of the next BJP chief. Earlier, the BJP has been seen seeking discussions on who the next national president should be.

**Jet fuel costs account for 45% of air ticket prices, says Minister**

Tamil Nadu among States with highest 29% VAT rate on ATE, he says in Parliament; more competition, aircraft will help lower rates, he adds

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The cost of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, makes up 45% of the airfare, Civil Aviation Minister K. Ramamoohan Naidu told the Lok Sabha on Thursday, noting that some States such as Tamil Nadu charge a high 29% value-added tax (VAT) on it.

"There are some States which are charging up to 29% VAT on ATF, and Tamil Nadu is one such State which has the highest ATF in the country," the Minister said.

While 15 States have reduced VAT on ATF to below 5%, others continue to impose higher rates, impacting airline operations and passenger fares, he added.

Mr. Naidu said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) monitored airfares and required airlines to submit a tariff sheet periodically. Earlier, airlines were required to submit a tariff sheet at the start of the summer and winter season, and had the liberty



**Sky-high rise:** As per Ram Mohan Naidu, 10% rate of yearly growth in air passengers in India was the highest in the world. **By SANKARANARAYANAN**

to change their tariffs, but they were now required to submit the tariff sheet every month and could not make tweaks to it.

His remarks in Parliament came at a time when the DGCA is examining aggregate data on airfares for the past two years submitted by airlines, following complaints of a sharp spike in ticket prices for flights to Prayagraj during the Kumbh Mela.

In response to a question from DMK MP A. Raja on why the government was not making efforts to inject more competition

into the sector — an oblique reference to the duopoly with IndiGo and Air India accounting for 98% of domestic air travellers — the Minister said that more competition and more aircraft would certainly help bring down airfares.

In 2014, there were 340 aircraft, which has grown to 840 now, Mr. Naidu said. Airlines also have orders for 1,700 more aircraft because of a massive demand for travel, he said, pointing out that the 10% rate of yearly growth in passengers in India was the highest in the world.

**Centre tells States to be prepared to tackle heat-related ailments**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Thursday directed the States to review the preparedness of health facilities for the management of heatstroke cases and heat-related illnesses.

Union Health Secretary Purnya Salila Srivastava, in a letter, noted that with the onset of summer, an increase in exposure to heat, including extreme conditions, may occur.

She said as some places in the country had begun experiencing high temperatures, health facilities needed to increase their resilience to heat by arranging uninterrupted power supply for the constant functioning of cooling appliances, installation of solar panels (wherever feasible), energy conservation measures and steps to reduce indoor heat through cool/green roofs (under the guidelines may be referred), window shades and so on.

Health facility preparedness must be reviewed for the availability of adequate quantities of essential medicines, intravenous fluids, ice packs, oral rehydration solution, and all necessary equipment to provide active, emergency cooling, the Ministry said.



To escape the Sun, a mother covers her son with her stole on Thursday. **NAGARA GOPAL**

"Rainwater harvesting and recycling plants may also be explored for self-sufficiency in water," she said.

The Ministry said that public health and clinical guidelines on 'heat and health' are available on the website of the National Centre for Disease Control. "States should disseminate these guidance documents to all districts for effective preparedness of health departments and health facilities to prevent, manage, and monitor the health impact of extreme heat," she said.

From March 1, through daily surveillance, patient-level information on clinical diagnosis of heatstroke is being captured on the Integrated Health Information Platform for all States and Union Territories.

**Union government to help States procure pulses at MSP: Agriculture Minister**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said here on Thursday that the purchase of *tur dal* (pigeon pea) in the major producing States had gained momentum.

"In order to increase domestic production of pulses, encourage farmers and reduce dependence on imports, the government has approved procurement of *tur*, *urad* (black gram), and lentil under Price Support Scheme at 100% of State production for the procurement year 2024-25," Mr. Chouhan said in a statement.

Citing the Budget announcement, he said 100% of the production of *tur* (*garhar*, *urad*, and the *Price Support Scheme* lentil) will be pro-



All production of *tur*, *urad*, and lentil will be procured till 2024-25. **MUHAMMAD YOUSUF**

duced till 2028-29 to achieve self-sufficiency in pulses in the country.

"The procurement of *tur* (*garhar*) has been approved in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Har-

aryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh during the Kharif

2024-25 season. Along with this, Karnataka has also approved extending the procurement period from 180 days by 30 days to May 1," the Minister said.

Mr. Chouhan added that procurement is continuing at minimum support prices through NAFED and NCCF in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Telangana.

All 25 States have a total of 2.46 lakh metric tonnes of *tur* (*garhar*) has been procured in these States, he added.

"The procurement of *tur* (*garhar*) has been approved in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Har-

aryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh during the Kharif

**House Standing Committee concerned over vacancies in nuclear and research projects**

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

Nearly three in five posts of scientific personnel sanctioned at one of India's top institutes for basic sciences research, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), are lying vacant.

Moreover, a quarter of the sanctioned posts at India's key atomic energy research institutions and nuclear power plants are vacant. This is significant because the Government has committed ₹20,000 crore this year for building small modular reactors.

This data emerges from a report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science, Technology and Environment tabled in both Houses of Parliament on Tuesday. The bipartisan committee expressed "serious concerns about work-force planning, recruitment efficiency, and the



**Big gap:** Three in five posts sanctioned for scientific personnel at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research lie vacant. **FILE PHOTO**

overall sustainability of nuclear and research projects in India."

At the TIFR, there are 839 vacant posts, a whopping 58% of the total 1,448 sanctioned posts. At the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), 3,841, or 26%, of the 14,445 sanctioned posts are vacant. At the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), the 596 unfilled posts account for 22% of the total 2,730 posts. At the

Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL), there are 4,343 posts to be filled, amounting to 28% of the 15,088 posts. In summary, of the 46,307 sanctioned posts across organisations under the Department of Atomic Energy, 13,449 posts — or 30% — were vacant.

"This 58% vacancy rate reflects a significant shortfall in scientific manpower. Such a high vacancy rate suggests that TIFR is heavily

reliant on contractual and research-based staff rather than regular employees. Given the institute's crucial role in fundamental research, this issue requires immediate attention to ensure stability in long-term scientific projects," said the report of the committee, chaired by BJP MP Bhuvaneshwar Kalita.

TIFR Director Jayaram Chhabbar had not responded to an email query on the reasons for the vacancies at the time of publication.

A senior scientist affiliated to one of the TIFR institutes and involved with hiring scientists declined to be identified but said that the numbers were "surprising" to him. De-

partment heads of TIFR institutes seeking to recruit more scientists were usually told by the parent DAE that the sanctioned posts were already full, he said. The Parliament committee report does not specify if the "sanctioned posts" only refers to scientists, faculty, and technical personnel or employees in non-technical roles as well.

On the shortfall in other atomic energy institutions, the committee said it was "concerned over these vacancies, especially in key operational areas such as nuclear power generation, research, and mineral extraction. The shortage of skilled personnel could delay research and development, cause inefficiencies in plant operations, and constraints in nuclear fuel production and "ultimately affect the country's nuclear energy programme," it said.

In a written response to the committee, the DAE said it had started a recruitment drive to mitigate workforce shortages.

**CROSSWORD 14444**

Crossword puzzle grid with clues. Clues include: 1. Reduce bit of booze and grease, start to diet now perhaps (4,4); 2. Chemically related compound is more volatile (6); 3. Rock legend entangled in love (7); 11. Almost sure, love rustic shunters (7); 13. Some require tutorial about reproductive organs (5); 13. See old criminal carrying firearm in American city (2,7).

- 14/ 25 Start immediately with enthusiasm, like one trying to jump safely out of moving bus with dog (3,3,6,7)
- 15 Husband breaks trust covering with blonde bombshells (12)
- 21 Desperately hope boxer finally wins title (5)
- 23 Approximately right, 100 arrested by spies (5)
- 24 Craver and sifter after drinking whiskey heartily (7)
- 25 See 14
- 26 Girls swimming closer to see young salmon (6)
- 27 Insisted on cooking a dessert (8)
- 28 new
- 1. Quarrel with American model in retro bar (4,2)
- 2. Portrayed male, one climbing over the hill (6)
- 3. Impressive director showed no stress at premiere (9)
- 4. Uprour about secrets discovered by commission in English county (14)
- 6. Swayed and crooned to captivate wife (5)
- 7. Sweet eaten by customer in gastrothe (6)
- 8. Returns in pool, wearing costume without top (8)
- 10. What makes a cast with opera stars flip out (7,2,5)
- 15. Reserve nice complex in exotic Crete (9)
- 16. Ducking and blocking, zero for Pakistan's opener (6)
- 17. Executed outside academy with knife mystic in Chinese city (8)
- 19. Creative person's eccentric traits (6)
- 20. Ranted about government in letters (6)
- 22. Hurries to catch glimpse of extraordinary mystic symbols (5)

**SUDOKU**

9x9 Sudoku grid with some numbers filled in. Difficulty rating: ★★★★★.

Solution to previous puzzle: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9; 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1; 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 2; 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 2 3; 5 6 7 8 9 1 2 3 4; 6 7 8 9 1 2 3 4 5; 7 8 9 1 2 3 4 5 6; 8 9 1 2 3 4 5 6 7; 9 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8.

**FAITH**

**Devotion unparalleled**

The gold standard for bhakti is Hanuman, whose devotion to Rama is unparalleled. Devotees believe that Hanuman chose to remain on earth in order to listen to Rama katha and be part of the various celebrations related to Rama, when the purpose of Perumal's manifestation on earth as Rama was achieved and He was ready to leave for Vaikunta. Such was his devotion that even Lord Krishna was desirous of seeing Hanuman, said Tirukkudanthai Dr. Venkatesh.

Krishna once sent an invitation to Hanuman to visit Him, but the latter declined politely, saying, "I will not look upon anyone else with these eyes of mine that saw Lord Rama." Deciding to sport with Hanuman, Krishna sent Garuda to Hanuman with the message that Rama was desirous of seeing Him. Immediately, Hanuman came rushing to meet Rama. Moved by his devotion, Krishna appeared in front of him in the garb of Rama. Hanuman appeared as Sita and Satyabhama as Lakshmana. Hanuman, realising that Krishna appeared thus in order to please him, was moved beyond words.

This incident is showcased on the fifth night of the two-week-long Brahmotsavam at the Mannargudi Rajagopalaswamy temple. As a humble offering to Krishna for His kindness, Hanuman makes his presence as the *panchma mukha* (five-faced) Hanuman, a rare sight. One face of the mount is that of Garuda, the second of Nrisimha, the third (Vagavira), the fourth Varaha and the fifth as a vanara. While various events from Krishna's life are shown on the other nights of the Brahmotsavam, a darshan of the *panchma mukha* Anjaneya (Hanuman) is held dear by devotees.

# Jet fuel costs account for 45% of air ticket prices, says Minister

Tamil Nadu among States with highest 29% VAT rate on ATF, he says in Parliament; more competition, aircraft will help lower rates, he adds

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

**T**he cost of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, makes up 45% of the airfare, Civil Aviation Minister K. Ram-mohan Naidu told the Lok Sabha on Thursday, noting that some States such as Tamil Nadu charge a high 29% value-added tax (VAT) on it.

“There are some States which are charging up to 29% VAT on ATF, and Tamil Nadu is one such State which has the highest ATF in the country,” the Minister said.

While 15 States have reduced VAT on ATF to below 5%, others continue to impose higher rates, impacting airline operations and passenger fares, he added.

Mr. Naidu said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) monitored airfares and required airlines to submit a tariff sheet periodically. Earlier, airlines were required to submit a tariff sheet at the start of the summer and winter season, and had the liberty



**Sky-high rise:** As per Ram Mohan Naidu, 10% rate of yearly growth in air passengers in India was the highest in the world. P.V. SIVAKUMAR

to change their tariffs, but they were now required to submit the tariff sheet every month and could not make tweaks to it.

His remarks in Parliament come at a time when the DGCA is examining aggregate data on airfares for the past two years submitted by airlines, following complaints of a sharp spike in ticket prices for flights to Prayagraj during the Kumbh Mela.

In response to a question from DMK MP A. Raja on why the government was not making efforts to inject more competition

into the sector – an oblique reference to the duopoly with IndiGo and Air India accounting for 91% of domestic air travellers – the Minister said that more competition and more aircraft would certainly help bring down airfares. In 2014, there were 340 aircraft, which has grown to 840 now, Mr. Naidu said. Airlines also have orders for 1,700 more aircraft because of a massive demand for travel, he said, pointing out that the 10% rate of yearly growth in passengers in India was the highest in the world.



<b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1. Base Fare</b>	The actual ticket price charged by the airline for the seat.
<b>2. Fuel Surcharge (if any)</b>	A variable fee to cover fuel costs (not always separate now; often part of base fare).
<b>3. Airport Development Fee (ADF)</b>	Charged by some airports to fund infrastructure development.
<b>4. Passenger Service Fee (PSF)</b>	Collected by the airport for using its services (security, facilities, etc.).
<b>5. User Development Fee (UDF)</b>	Levied by major airports like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, etc.
<b>6. Goods &amp; Services Tax (GST)</b>	Applied on domestic airfares:

<b>Component</b>	<b>Approx. Cost (₹)</b>
Base Fare	₹2,800
GST (5%)	₹140
PSF	₹150
UDF / ADF	₹300
ASF	₹200
<b>Total</b>	<b>₹5,000</b>

## **Jet Fuel Cost Impact:**

- Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) accounts for **45% of air ticket prices**, as per Civil Aviation Minister **K. Ram Mohan Naidu**.
- High **Value Added Tax (VAT)** by states adds to costs – **Tamil Nadu** levies the highest VAT at **29%**.

## **State-wise VAT Policy:**

- **15 states** have reduced VAT to **below 5%**.
- Other states continue charging high VAT, adversely affecting **airline operations and fare pricing**.

## **DGCA Monitoring:**

- The **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** now monitors fares more strictly.
- Airlines must submit **monthly tariff sheets** (earlier done only at the start of summer/winter).

## **Spike in Airfare During Kumbh Mela:**

- Parliament was informed that DGCA is examining airfare data from the last 2 years after complaints about high prices, especially for **Prayagraj (Kumbh Mela)** flights.

## **1.Competition and Market Share:**

- 1. IndiGo and Air India** control **91%** of domestic air travel.
- Government aims to inject **more competition** to bring down fares.

## **2.Fleet Expansion:**

- India had **340 aircraft in 2014**, now **840**.
- Orders placed for **1,700 more aircraft** due to surging demand.
- India's **passenger growth rate is 10% annually**, the **highest globally**.

## U.K. bond chief hails shift from long-dated issuance



New lows: The share of gilts with a maturity of more than 15 years will drop to 13%, the lowest since 1990, AFP.

Reuters  
LONDON

The head of the agency that issues British government bonds said there would be an "important shift" away from long-dated debt in the coming financial year in response to rising borrowing costs and reduced investor demand.

The United Kingdom Debt Management Office announced on Wednesday that it would issue 299 billion pounds (\$385 billion) of government bonds this year—the second highest amount on record. But the share accounted for by long-dated conventional gilts with a maturity of more than 15 years will drop to 13%, the lowest since 1990 and down from nearly 20% this financial year.

"The DMO is going to continue... a well-diversified programme of issuance across all maturity sectors. But there is an important shift in the proportions this year," DMO Chief Executive Jessica Pulay said.

"This reflects our analysis of cost and risk for the exchequer, and this also takes into account market feedback on declining structural demand for long-dated gilts," she added.

Britain has the longest average maturity debt stock of any Group of Seven economy, at 14.4 years at the end of 2024. This reflects historic demand from British pension funds and life insurers which has faded significantly in recent years, prompting bond investors and dealers to recommend the DMO scale back long-dated issuance at a faster pace this year.

Gilt prices rose sharply after the DMO announcement which showed slightly lower than-expected planned overall gilt sales for 2025/26—with 30-year gilts gaining the most.

"I like it. There was no need for the DMO to issue so many longer-dated gilts," said James Athey, a fixed income manager at UK-based fund manager Marlborough.

Thirty-year gilt yields hit their highest level since 1998 in January at 5.47% and 5.30% still command a greater premium over short-dated gilts than is the case with U.S. bonds.

**Shifting shorter**  
Tilting issuance towards short-dated gilts with a maturity of up to seven years—which will account for at least 37% of issuance in the coming year, up from 35% before—would also make it easier to hold larger auctions, Ms. Pulay said.

Long-dated gilts are riskier for most investors than shorter maturities, so actions for the former must generally be smaller.

Ms. Pulay also highlighted an increase in the "unallocated" portion of gilt issuance which stands at 9% at the start of the 2025/26 financial year compared with 4% at the start of 2024/25.

This would allow the DMO to respond to year-increase in market demand for gilt "on a more regular and active basis," she said.

Britain has generally attracted high demand for gilts at auctions and at bond syndications—several of which have attracted record volumes of orders this year, including for long-dated conventional and index-linked gilts.

## Sudan's booming wartime gold trade now flows through the UAE

The two-year conflict has decimated Sudan's economy, yet last month the army-backed government announced record gold production in 2024; the United Arab Emirates has also played a major role in the Sudanese government's wartime gold rush, indirectly helping to fund its war effort

NEWS ANALYSIS

Agence France-Presse  
PORT SUDAN

Sudan's gold industry has become the lifeblood of its war, with nearly all of the trade channelled through the United Arab Emirates, enriching both the army and paramilitaries, according to official and NGO sources.

The two-year conflict has decimated Sudan's economy, yet last month the army-backed government announced record gold production in 2024.

Demand for the country's vast gold reserves was "a key factor in prolonging the war," Sudanese economist Abdelazim al-Anaway told AFP.

"To solve the war in Sudan, we have to follow the gold, and we arrive at the UAE," said Marc Ummel, a researcher with development organisation Swissaid who tracks international gold smuggling to the Gulf country.

In a statement to AFP, a UAE official rejected "any baseless and unfounded allegations regarding the smuggling or profiting of gold." But according to Sudanese officials, mining industry sources and Swissaid's research, nearly all of Sudan's gold flows to the UAE, via official trade routes, smuggling and direct Emirati ownership of



Booming trade: Sudan's gold production reached 64 tonnes in 2024, up from 41.8 tonnes in 2022, AFP.

the government's currently most lucrative mine.

In February, the state-owned Sudan Mineral Resources Company said gold production reached 64 tonnes in 2024, up from 41.8 tonnes in 2022.

Legal exports brought \$1.57 billion into the state's depleted coffers, central bank figures show. But "nearly half of the state's production is smuggled across borders," SMRC director Mohammed Taber told AFP from Port Sudan.

Nearly 2,000 kilometres (1,240 miles) away, on Sudan's borders with South Sudan and the Central African Republic, lie the mines controlled by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

Much of the gold produced by both sides is smuggled to Chad, South Sudan and Egypt, before reaching the UAE, according to mining industry sources and experts.

**Emirati assets**  
This month, Sudan filed a case with the International Court of Justice, accusing the UAE of complicity in genocide committed by the RSF in Darfur.

Abu Dhabi, which has repeatedly denied accusations of funneling weapons to the RSF, has called the case a "publicity stunt" and said it would seek to have it thrown out.

But the UAE has also played a major role in the government's wartime gold rush, indirectly helping to fund its war effort.

According to Taber, 90% of the state's legal exports of gold go to the UAE, though the government is eyeing alternatives, including Qatar and Turkey.

In the heart of army territory, halfway between Port Sudan and Khartoum, Sudan's Kush mine is the centrepiece of the government's gold industry.

Evacuated when the war began, it is now back

to producing hundreds of kilograms per month, according to an engineer at the Russian-built facility, owned by Dubai-based Emirati Resources.

On its website, Emirati Kush lists as one of its holdings, alongside subsidiary Alliance for Mining, which it says is "the largest industrial gold producer in Sudan".

**Underground**  
According to data from Dubai's commodities exchange, the UAE became the world's second-largest gold exporter in 2023, overtaking Britain. It is also the leading destination for smuggled African gold, according to Swissaid.

Abu Dhabi said it has adopted a "responsible gold sourcing policy", including a regulatory legal framework revised in January 2023, to develop a "well-regulated gold sector." According to Mr. Ummel, "when you look at the gold rush, that's not the case. If this Due Diligence Regulations for Responsible Sourcing of Gold was really implemented, all refineries in the UAE would have to do due diligence, the most basic element of which was already in place when gold was declared in the UAE, where it comes from," he said.

In 2023, data obtained by Swissaid showed the gold imports from Chad—on Sudan's western bor-

der—were more than double the country's estimated maximum capacity, suggesting the majority of it was undeclared and smuggled across borders.

Mr. Ummel says there is no indication the UAE's conflict-gold market has shrunk in recent years.

In the vast Esharta region, RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Dagha has controlled gold mines for years. According to Sudan expert Alex de Waal, these enabled him to establish a "private transnational mercenary enterprise", mainly through his family's Al-Juhaid Multi Activities Co—sanctioned by both the U.S. and the EU.

A UN panel of experts last year concluded that Mr. Dagha's gold wealth helped him buy weapons and bankroll his war effort. In the southern border area alone produces at least 150 kilograms of gold per month, one former insider told AFP.

It is sent first to an airport in the South Sudanese town of Raga, and then transported by plane to Uganda and Kenya, and then to the UAE", the engineer, who had taken the trip himself, said.

According to Mr. Ummel, "the United Arab Emirates is not really implementing their regulation, they don't carry out all the necessary controls and at the end they are continuing to fund the war."

## High-water mark for U.S. investment deficit?

Mike Dolan  
LONDON

The main thrust of President Donald Trump's global economic policies is clearly directed toward the U.S.'s yawning trade deficit, as he seeks to stop "free-riding" other countries from undercutting U.S. producers by overvaluing the dollar, frustrating U.S. exports and sapping American consumers.

Less talked about is the accounting flipside of the U.S. trade and current account shortfall: the country's massive capital surplus. America, with its large, liquid capital markets, effectively imports more of the world's savings than U.S. savers send abroad to Europe, Asia or the developing world.



Flip side: While many talk about the U.S. trade deficit, not much attention is paid to the investment deficit, REUTERS.

Put another way, the U.S. Net International Investment Position (NIIP)—or the difference in value between overseas holdings of U.S. assets and U.S. assets held overseas by Americans—has been ballooning for more than a decade. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analy-

sis, that NIIP gap hit yet another record high at the end of 2024: \$26.2 trillion, or a whopping 88% of annual U.S. GDP.

The NIIP has been inflated over the past decade not only by insatiable foreign appetite for U.S. stocks, bonds and real estate but also by the massive

appreciation of those assets versus smaller gains in the rest of the world.

These stellar returns have, in turn, drawn ever more inflows in a virtuous loop, bolstered by the attraction of U.S. tech innovation alongside the traditional safe-haven allure of U.S. Treasuries. And it's been these capital flows rather than the dollar gap that have been chiefly responsible for the appreciation in the past decade.

Reversing these flows could be painful for Americans as it could seriously undermine the asset price and foreign appetite for U.S. equities and enriched many.

**\$30 trillion tsunami**  
Under the hood, the numbers are even more eye-popping. Total overseas holdings

of U.S. assets—or America's overall liabilities to the rest of the world—increased by almost \$8 trillion in the first quarter of last year, a gobsmacking \$62.12 trillion. That's almost twice what it was a decade ago and nearly double the entire U.S. government debt pile. And it was equities that were doing all the heavy lifting here, not U.S. debt prices that were going in the opposite direction.

The value of portfolio equity and investment fund shares jumped by another \$676 billion in the final quarter of 2024 to some \$1.5 trillion.

Of course, this is all the months ahead of date, and we know what's happened since.

Next week's tariff announcements will clearly impact all of this and it's

unclear what plans are actually coming.

What's not in doubt is the degree to which U.S. markets are knee-deep in a foreign investment that's been increasingly in more volatile equities rather than traditionally stickier fixed-income assets.

According to numbers compiled by Apollo Chief Economist Torsten Slok, some 60% of all foreign holdings of U.S. assets are now in equities compared to just 15% in Treasuries. Fifteen years ago, those equivalent shares were 33% and 22%, respectively.

For foreign money centers to turn tail, it could be a rough year ahead of date, and we know what's happened since.

(The author is a columnist for Reuters)

## Green iron is a prize worth billions, winning is the trick

Clyde Russell  
PERTH

Decarbonising the steel industry is one of the most massive challenges in meeting climate goals, but could end up being extremely profitable for companies and governments if prepared to take the risks.

The steel value chain accounts for 7% to 9% of global carbon emissions, the single largest industrial contributor and thus a prime target for the net-zero by 2050 goals of many countries and companies.

The problem is that about 80% of steel emissions come from a single step in the process: returning iron ore into pig, or crude, iron by removing oxygen and other impurities, a process that now in-

volves using a lot of coal. The good news is there are available technologies to take coal largely out of the mix, and when the eventual finished steel will not be emissions-free, it is possible to get the carbon intensity down to around 1,000 kg (2,200 lb) per ton of steel, about one-seventh of the current 2.2 tonnes of emissions.

The bad news is that adopting these technologies at the necessary scale requires not only huge capital investments, but massive amounts of cheap

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# Green iron is a prize worth billions, winning is the trick

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volves using a lot of coal.

The good news is there are available technologies to take coal largely out of the mix, and while the eventual finished steel will not be emissions-free, it is possible to get the carbon intensity down to around 300 kg (661 lb) per ton of steel, about one-seventh of the current 2.2 tons of emissions.

The bad news is that adopting these technologies at the necessary scale requires not only huge capital investments, but massive amounts of cheap green energy and coordinated government regulations and incentives across all countries, from resource producers like Australia to steel makers like China and Japan.

Australia's iron ore ex-



**Need buyers:** Investors will need a high degree of certainty that there are buyers for green iron. AFP

ports are worth about \$85 billion a year and metallurgical coal a further \$34 billion, but the potential increase in value by switching to producing

green iron for export was put as high as \$252 billion a year. That assumes converting most of the current iron ore volumes to green iron through a process of

using hydrogen made from renewable energies such as solar and wind.

A more realistic view of converting 40% of iron ore output to green iron by

2050 still yields an impressive value of around \$110 billion per year, to which would be added the value of the other 60% of iron ore still being shipped.

But building the energy and processing infrastructure to achieve this will require massive amounts of capital, running into hundreds of billions of dollars. But before such huge amounts of capital are deployed, investors will need a high degree of certainty.

## Commitments needed

Steel mills in existing heavyweights like China, Japan and South Korea will need to commit to actually buying green iron.

This means they will have to commit capital to switching steel production from the coal-intensive

basic oxygen furnace-blast furnace method to using electric arc furnaces, which can process green iron into steel without using coal for smelting.

Steel makers will also have to agree to invest in Australian green iron plants and share the up-front capital costs.

Miners are good at digging and shipping iron ore, so they will have to learn how to process the raw ore into pig iron using green hydrogen, which effectively means finding partners with expertise in building firm renewable power plants and hydrogen production plants.

The problem is aligning all the various parties together in order to kick start what is effectively a new industry, albeit one using an

existing raw material.

There is also probably a major role to be played by governments in Australia and across Asia. Low-emissions steel is going to be more expensive to produce than the current high-emissions product.

Experience suggests consumers are unlikely to voluntarily pay more for a low-emissions product, meaning that the steel sector has to either be punished by carbon taxes or incentivised by subsidies in order to switch.

Right now the green iron dream is like a small snowball at the top of a mountain. To start rolling downhill and gaining size and speed it needs some initial momentum.

*(The author is a columnist for Reuters)*

## What is Green Iron?

- Green iron is iron produced using **green hydrogen (from renewable energy)** instead of coal.
- This significantly **reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** during steel production.

## Why It Matters?

- Steel industry contributes **7–9% of global carbon emissions**.
- Around **80% of these emissions** come from converting iron ore into pig iron using **coal**.
- Replacing this with green hydrogen can cut emissions to **300 kg/ton**, down from 2.2 tons/ton of steel.



## Economic Opportunity

- Current iron ore exports (Australia): **\$85 billion**; Metallurgical coal: **\$34 billion**.
- Switching to green iron can boost export value to:
  - Up to **\$252 billion/year** (if 100% conversion),
  - Realistic view: **\$110 billion/year** with 40% conversion.

## Challenges

- High **capital cost** and infrastructure needed (hundreds of billions).
- Requires:
  - Cheap renewable energy,
  - Global government coordination,
  - Buyers like **China, Japan, South Korea** to commit.

## **Market Readiness**

- Consumers won't pay more voluntarily.
- Governments must **incentivize (subsidies)** or **penalize (carbon tax)** high-emission steel.
- “Green iron” needs **initial momentum** like a snowball.

## WASHINGTON

## Trump calls for defunding public media citing 'political' content



President Trump on Thursday demanded Congress "immediately" defund two public broadcasters — NPR and PBS — labelling them biased "radical left" platforms. Republicans echoed this, criticising their content as politically driven. Democrats opposed, citing harm to rural communities and free speech concerns.

## CAIRO

## Tourist submarine sinks off Egypt's coast, leaving 6 dead and 9 injured



A tourist submarine sank near Hurghada, Egypt, killing six and injuring nine, officials said on Thursday. Emergency crews rescued 29 of the 45 passengers of various nationalities onboard. It was not immediately clear what caused the submarine to sink. Tourism is an important sector of Egypt's economy.

## BEIJING

## China rebuffs Trump offer of tariff cut if Beijing agrees to TikTok deal



China rebuffed on Thursday a suggestion from U.S. President Donald Trump to reduce tariffs in exchange for Beijing's approval to sell TikTok. The app faces a U.S. ban unless sold by April 5 due to national security concerns. Mr. Trump may extend the deadline if a deal is not reached in time.

## DAMASCUS

## Syrian state media says Israeli air strikes hit coastal province



Israeli air strikes hit Latakia province in Syria on Thursday, targeting Al-Bayd part and the city. Syrian state media reported no immediate casualties. A war monitor said munitions depots were struck, causing significant damage. Israel has intensified military operations in Syria since Bashar al-Assad's ouster in December.

## War information shared on Signal was not classified, says White House

Democrats say the gov't. response strains credibility considering that the leak detailed plans for a coming attack on Houthis; Trump dismisses the debate as a 'witch hunt'; FBI Director Kash Patel faces scrutiny but did not commit to probe the leak

## Associated Press

## WASHINGTON

The Trump administration struggled on Wednesday to stem the fallout from revelations that top national security officials discussed sensitive attack plans over a messaging app and mistakenly added a journalist to the chain.

The White House said the information was shared through the publicly available Signal app with Jeffrey Goldberg, editor-in-chief of *The Atlantic* magazine, was not classified, an assertion that Democrats said strains credibility considering that it detailed plans for



Press secretary Karoline Leavitt during a briefing in the Brady Briefing Room of the White House in Washington DC.

an upcoming attack on Yemen's Houthis. President Donald Trump during an Oval Office appearance to announce new tariffs on

The decision on determining whether the information is classified ultimately lies with Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, who in the chain listed weapons systems and a timeline for the attack.

Even as Mr. Trump insisted "it is not really an FBI thing," the reality is that the FBI and Justice Department for decades have been responsible for enforcing Espionage Act statutes governing the handling of national defence information like the kind shared on Signal, a publicly available app that provides encrypted communications but is not approved for classified information.

Mr. Patel made no such commitments during the course of two days of Sen-

ate and House hearings. Instead, he testified that he had not personally reviewed the text messages that were inadvertently shared on an unclassified Signal chat.

Mr. Trump insisted "it is not really an FBI thing," the reality is that the FBI and Justice Department for decades have been responsible for enforcing Espionage Act statutes governing the handling of national defence information like the kind shared on Signal, a publicly available app that provides encrypted communications but is not approved for classified information.

Mr. Patel made no such commitments during the course of two days of Sen-

## European force on agenda as Macron hosts Ukraine meet

## Associated Press

## PARIS

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Wednesday that a proposed European armed force for possible deployment in Ukraine in tandem with an eventual peace deal could "respond" to a Russian attack if Moscow launched one.

Mr. Macron spoke after talks with Ukraine's President and ahead of a summit in Paris of some 30 nations on Thursday that will discuss the proposed force for Ukraine that Mr. Macron suggested could be deployed in "important towns" and elsewhere.

"If there was again a generalised aggression against Ukrainian soil, these armies would, in fact, be under attack and then it is our usual frame-



Emmanuel Macron

work of engagement," Mr. Macron said.

Mr. Macron, together with U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer, has been driving an effort to build a coalition of nations willing in one way or another to support the deployment of an armed force in Ukraine, with the aim of securing a lasting peace by dissuading Russia from attacking the country again.

Mr. Macron didn't specify what sort of response he

envisaged in the eventuality of a Russian attack.

"Hollow promises"

Meanwhile, Mr. Starmer said Russian President Vladimir Putin's "promises are hollow" on any eventual ceasefire with Ukraine.

"Unlike (Ukrainian) President (Volodymyr) Zelenskyy, Mr. Putin has shown he is not a serious player in these peace talks," Mr. Starmer said.

"Playing games with the agreed naval ceasefire in the Black Sea despite good faith participation from all sides — all while continuing to inflict devastating attacks on the Ukrainian people. His promises are hollow," he said. He added to those with which played a leading role by convening the ceasefire talks.

(With AP inputs)

## NATO clarifies status of missing U.S. soldiers

## Associated Press

## WARSAW

NATO on Wednesday clarified comments that Secretary-General Mark Rutte made earlier in the day, when he suggested that four U.S. soldiers who went missing while training in Lithuania had died, even though the U.S. Army said their fate was not yet confirmed.

"The search is ongoing," NATO said in a statement posted on X. "We regret any confusion about remarks @SecGenNATO delivered on this today. He was referring to emerging news reports & was not confirming the fate of the missing, which is still unknown."

The U.S. Army said the Hercules armored vehicle

the four U.S. soldiers were in during a training exercise had been found submerged in a body of water. It said recovery efforts were under way by U.S. Army and Lithuanian Armed Forces and civilian agencies.

The soldiers, all from 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, were conducting tactical training when they went missing.

Lithuanian public broadcaster LRT reported that the four U.S. soldiers and their vehicle were reported missing on Tuesday afternoon during an exercise at the General Silvestras Žukauskas training ground in Palūdrė, a town located less than 10 kilometres from the border with Belarus.

## Early alert



An innovation: An engineer during a presentation on "Silvaguard", the first autonomous, AI-based drone system for early forest fire detection in Eberswalde, eastern Germany, on Thursday.

## Protests to reinstate monarchy in Nepal to be intensified

## Press Trust of India

## KATHMANDU

Pro-monarchists in Nepal on Thursday announced to intensify their agitation by organising a protest rally on Friday with the aim of reinstatement of monarchy.

Holding a press conference here, they also announced forming a joint People's Movement Committee led by Navraj Subedi, an 87-year-old staunch supporter of former King Gyanendra.

The pro-monarchists said they will organise a grand protest rally at Tinkune area demanding restoration of monarchy. Nepal's political parties through a Parliament de-

claration abolished the 240-year-old monarchy in 2008 and turned the erstwhile Hindu kingdom to a secular, federal, democratic republic.

On Friday, the Socialist Forum, a four-party alliance, is also organising a demonstration against the republic system to counter the pro-monarchists. CPN-Maoist Centre, CPN-Unified Socialist among others are joining the demonstration with the aim of strengthening republic system in the country.

In view of the protests being organised by two different groups in Kathmandu, Nepal police have tightened security and increased vigilance.

The pro-monarchists, including leaders of Rastriya Prajatantra Party, have been raising their voice for reinstating monarchy since the democracy day on February 19, when ex-king Gyanendra in a message said that "time has come for us to assume responsibility to protect the country and bring about national unity".

Meanwhile, Minister for Home Affairs Ramesh Lekhak has said that an autocratic system cannot be an alternative to democracy.

## U.S. drops bounties on top Taliban officials

## Agence France-Press

## KABUL

The United States removed multimillion-dollar bounties on leaders of Afghanistan's feared Haqqani militant network, such as Sirajuddin Haqqani, Abdul Aziz Haqqani, and Yahya Haqqani. However, they still remain on the list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists. This symbolic move follows the Taliban's release of a U.S. prisoner and hints at improving bilateral relations. Sirajuddin Haqqani had long been one of Washington's most important targets, with a \$10 million bounty on his head.

## Israel passes law enabling political control over judicial appointments

## Agence France-Press

## JERUSALEM

Israel's parliament on Thursday passed a law expanding elected officials' power to appoint judges, defying a years-long movement against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's contentious judicial reforms that saw massive street protests.

The approval comes as Mr. Netanyahu's government, one of the most right-wing in Israel's history, is locked in a stand-off with the supreme court after the Opposition swiftly filed a petition challenging the vote, viewing these judicial reforms as a step towards an authoritarian



Protesters in Jerusalem during a demonstration against a law enabling political control over judicial appointments. GETTY IMAGES

sponsored the Bill, the measure was intended to "restore balance" between the legislative and judicial branches.

Currently, judges are selected by a nine-member committee comprising judges, lawmakers, and bar association representatives, under the Justice Minister's supervision.

Under the new law, the committee would still have nine members: three supreme court judges, the Justice Minister and another Minister, one coalition lawmaker, one Opposition lawmaker and two public representatives — one appointed by the majority and the other by the Opposition.

## Rubio offers U.S. security for Guyana

## Agence France-Press

## KINGSTON

Secretary of State Marco Rubio heads on Thursday to Guyana to offer to put the newly oil-rich nation under the U.S. security umbrella as neighbouring Venezuela insists claims.

A decade after the discovery of vast reserves, the small South American nation is poised this year to become the world's largest producer of oil on a per capita basis, outpacing Iraq and Kuwait.

With tensions on the rise between Guyana and U.S. nemesis Venezuela, Mr. Rubio will sign a memorandum of understanding that outlines security cooperation, according to the State Department.



Marco Rubio

President Donald Trump's administration said it envisioned a relationship with Guyana akin to those with oil-rich Gulf Arab nations, which welcome U.S. troops for their security.

Guyanese President Irfaan Ali, who faces re-election this year, has embraced closer defence cooperation with the U.S.

# Israel passes law enabling political control over judicial appointments

**Agence France-Presse**

JERUSALEM

Israel's parliament on Thursday passed a law expanding elected officials' power to appoint judges, defying a years-long movement against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's contentious judicial reforms that saw massive street protests.

The approval comes as Mr. Netanyahu's government, one of the most right-wing in Israel's history, is locked in a stand-off with the supreme court after beginning proceedings to dismiss Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara and announcing the sacking of Ronen Bar, head of the in-



Protesters in Jerusalem during a demonstration against a law enabling political control over judicial appointments. GETTY IMAGES

ternal security agency.

Critics said the new law was a “nail in the coffin of Israeli democracy,” while the Opposition swiftly filed a petition challenging the vote, viewing these judicial changes as signs of Mr. Netanyahu's authoritarian

shift toward an illiberal democracy.

The legislation was approved by a vote of 67 in favour and one against, with the Opposition boycotting the early-morning vote.

According to Justice Minister Yariv Levin, who

sponsored the Bill, the measure was intended to “restore balance” between the legislative and judicial branches.

Currently, judges are selected by a nine-member committee comprising judges, lawmakers, and bar association representatives, under the Justice Minister's supervision.

Under the new law, the committee would still have nine members: three supreme court judges, the Justice Minister and another Minister, one coalition lawmaker, one Opposition lawmaker, and two public representatives – one appointed by the majority and the other by the Opposition.

## What Happened?

- The **Israeli Parliament (Knesset)** passed a **controversial law** that gives **elected officials more power to appoint judges**.
- The move is part of **PM Netanyahu's judicial overhaul** which has sparked **massive protests**.



### **Key Provisions of the Law:**

- The current 9-member judicial selection committee (including judges, lawmakers, bar members) is **restructured**:

Still has 9 members, but **political influence increases.**

New structure:

- 3 Supreme Court judges
- 2 Ministers (Justice + another)
- 2 Lawmakers (one from ruling, one from opposition)
- 2 public representatives (one each by ruling & opposition)

## Criticism & Concerns:

- Described as a **“nail in the coffin of Israeli democracy”**
- Seen as a move toward **“illiberal democracy”**
- Critics say it **compromises judicial independence**.
- Opposition boycotted the vote and filed a **legal petition**.



## Voting Outcome:

- Passed with **67 in favour, 1 against**, rest boycotted.



## Government's Justification:

- Aimed to **“restore balance”** between judiciary and legislature.
- Justice Minister Yariv Levin backed the bill.

# As AI-generated art goes viral, the story of Miyazaki and his Studio Ghibli

ANAGHA JAYAKUMAR &  
ARJUN SENGUPTA

NEW DELHI, MARCH 27

STUDIO GHIBLI-STYLE images have taken over the Internet after OpenAI released its “most advanced image generator yet” via an update to the GPT-4o model. People around the world have been using the artificial intelligence chatbot to adapt images to the distinctive style developed by legendary Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki.

But not everyone is happy. Many see this as an affront to the creative process, especially given Miyazaki’s own views about AI-generated art.

## Analogue artist in a digital age

Miyazaki was born in Tokyo in 1941. At an early age, he got hooked on manga, a popular and distinctive style of Japanese comics and graphic novels. After studying economics and political science at university, he began his career as an animator in 1963.

Miyazaki worked in the long-running

series *World Masterpiece Theater*, and films such as *The Wonderful World of Puss 'n Boots* (1969) and *Future Boy Conan* (1978) before co-founding Studio Ghibli with director Isao Takahata, and producer Toshio Suzuki in 1985. Miyazaki has himself directed most of the films produced by the studio.

Over the years, Studio Ghibli has developed a distinctive aesthetic, one that has found admirers around the world. Miyazaki’s frames are vivid in detail, rich in colour, and imbibe even daily objects with a dream-like character.

Crucially, Studio Ghibli productions are meticulously hand-painted, and use next to no digital assistance. Even in an age where computer animation has taken over the world, Miyazaki’s work is defined by the fact that behind each frame is the labour of a human illustrator, often Miyazaki himself.

“I believe that the tool of an animator is the pencil,” he told *The New York Times* in an interview in 2021.

Naturally, Miyazaki has been a vocal critic of AI-generated art.

For *Never-Ending Man: Hayao Miyazaki*, a 2016 documentary about his life, he was



A still from Hayao Miyazaki’s Oscar-winning *The Boy and the Heron* (2023). Studio Ghibli via AP

shown a demonstration of an AI-generated animation. His response has gone on to become one of the most oft-quoted repudiations of AI art.

“I am utterly disgusted... I would never wish to incorporate this technology into my work at all. I strongly feel that this is an insult to life itself,” he famously said, before ending the discussion with the follow-

ing words: “I feel like we are nearing the end of times. We humans are losing faith in ourselves.”

## Progressive themes

Much like their visual aesthetic, Studio Ghibli’s stories blend the mundane with the fantastical. They are also deeply political, and contain complex characters who blur the bi-

nary between good and evil.

Having grown up in post-World War II Japan, pacifism is a recurring theme in Miyazaki’s works.

*Porco Rosso* (1991) was described by Daisuke Akimoto as “anti-war propaganda”. He wrote that the “fundamental political message of the film is not only anti-fascism, but also anti-war pacifism”. (*A Pig, the State and War: Porco Rosso* published in 2014 in *Animation Studies*). In *Princess Mononoke* (1997), the protagonist goes against tradition to try and end a historic conflict between two communities.

Environmentalism is another common theme of Studio Ghibli films. In 2008, Miyazaki told *The Japan Times* that he felt very frustrated growing up because he saw nature being destroyed “in the name of economic progress”.

Miyazaki’s films push audiences to reflect on the effects of capitalism on the natural world by telling stories about the relationship between humans and nature. Hannah Kong Walter wrote for *The Cambridge Language Collective* earlier this year: “Nature in Studio Ghibli is never just a physical setting: it is otherworldly, and if

nothing else, a reminder of the power and beauty of the imagination. These films do not so much concern the natural world and its importance as one’s connection to it.”

Miyazaki has also been praised for his treatment of female characters. Many Studio Ghibli films tell coming-of-age stories of girls. But they do so without resorting to either sexualisation or fluff, something that is rare even today. His female protagonists are strong-willed, capable of navigating the complexities of the world while still remaining true to themselves.

*Spirited Away* (2001), perhaps the most famous Studio Ghibli film of all time, tells the story of ten-year-old Chihiro, who mysteriously gets trapped in the world of *kami* — spirits in Japanese folklore — and must figure out a way to free her family, and return to the human world.

This was the first non-English film to win the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature (although Miyazaki refused to attend the ceremony, citing his opposition to the Iraq War), and has found itself on multiple ‘Best Of’ lists. Miyazaki’s *The Boy and the Heron* (2023) too won the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature.

EXPLAINED  
CULTURE



## What's Happening? | क्या हो रहा है?

- **OpenAI's GPT-4o** update has led to a wave of **AI-generated images** mimicking the **Studio Ghibli style** — a distinctive hand-drawn aesthetic by **legendary Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki**.

## Who is Hayao Miyazaki? | हायाओ मियाज़ाकी कौन हैं?

- Born in **1941, Tokyo**. Influenced by **manga** and **post-WWII pacifism**.
- Career began in **1963**; co-founded **Studio Ghibli** in **1985** with Isao Takahata.
- Directed masterpieces like:
  - *Spirited Away (2001)* – Won **Academy Award for Best Animated Feature**.
  - *The Boy and The Heron (2023)* – Also Oscar winner.

- Studio Ghibli films are:
  - **Hand-painted**, no digital shortcuts.
  - Focused on **anti-war, environmentalism, pacifism, and strong female characters**.
  - Nature & imagination > modern materialism.

## Progressive Themes | प्रगतिशील विषय

- **Porco Rosso** called "anti-war propaganda".
- **Princess Mononoke** tackled **human vs nature conflict**.
- Female protagonists are **brave, thoughtful, unsexualised**.
- *Spirited Away* – story of a girl trapped in **kami (spirit)** world.

 Themes include:

- Anti-capitalism
- Environmental protection
- Individual freedom

# Indian billionaires' wealth a third of country's GDP

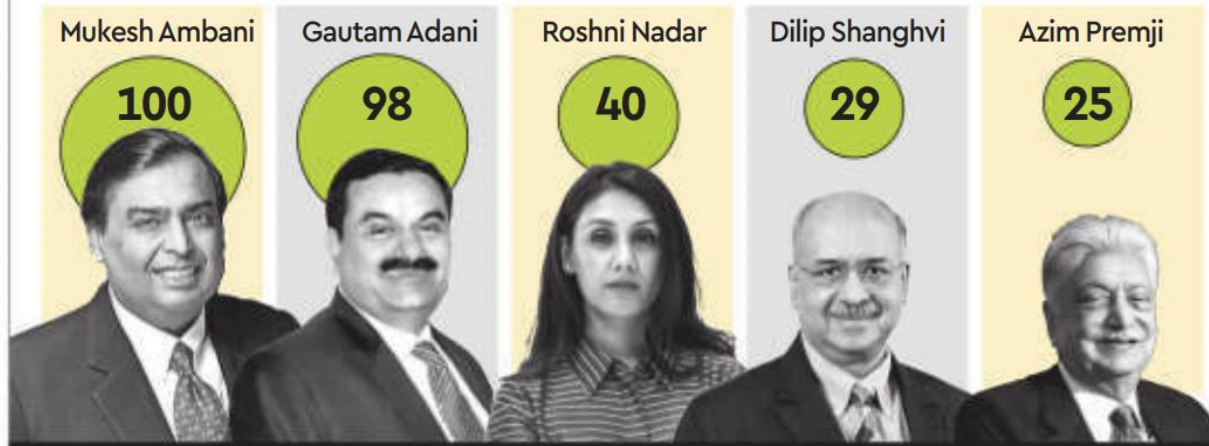
*New Delhi:* The cumulative wealth of 284 Indian billionaires is a third of the country's GDP, a report said. Gautam Adani has emerged as the biggest wealth gainer globally with a Rs 1 lakh crore jump in his fortune to Rs 8.4 lakh crore, as per the Hurun Global Rich List. Mukesh Ambani saw a 13 per cent drop in his wealth to Rs 8.6 lakh crore. **PTI**

# Ambani out of global 10 rich list

Mukesh Ambani (net worth \$100 billion) retained the title of India's richest individual, but dropped out of the world's wealthiest top 10 while Gautam Adani (\$98 billion) was India's biggest wealth gainer in absolute terms in the Hurun's Global Rich List 2025, released on Thursday. HCL's Roshni Nadar is at the third spot with a net worth of \$40 billion, making her the fifth richest woman in the world. Compiled by **Viveat Susan Pinto**

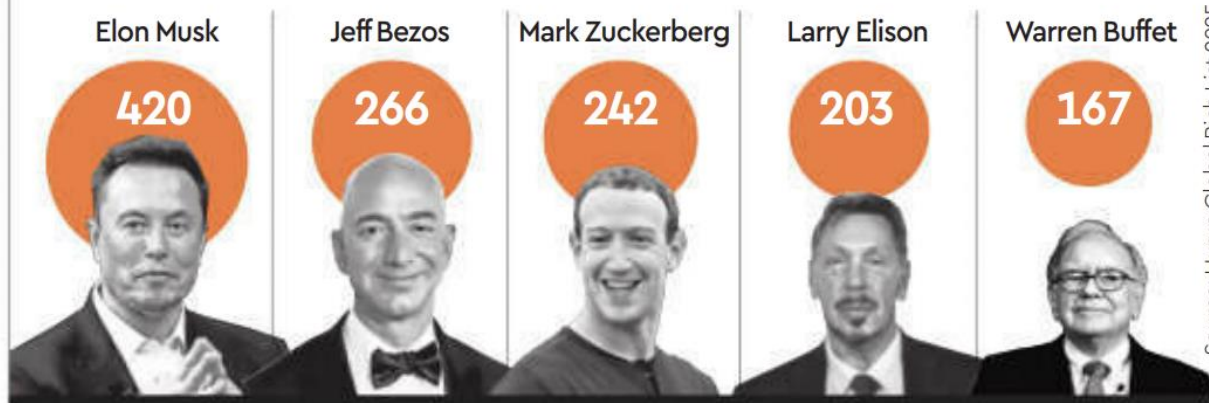
## INDIA'S TOP 5 RICHEST PEOPLE

Wealth (in \$billion)



## WORLD'S TOP 5 RICHEST PEOPLE

Wealth (in \$billion)



Source: Hurun Global Rich List 2025

# Bedmap3

- Scientists have created the most comprehensive map yet of Antarctica's landscape beneath its ice sheet, **called Bedmap3**.

## **Bedmap3**

- It extends the previous Bedmap2 dataset.
- It includes data from 84 new aero-geophysical surveys, 15 data sources, 52 million additional data points, and 1.9 million line-km of measurements.
- **Coverage of Gaps:** It fills major gaps in knowledge, including information on mountain ranges, the deep interior of East Antarctica, and the coastlines of West Antarctica and the Antarctic Peninsula.



## Importance

- Bedmap3 provides a clearer picture of Antarctica's subglacial landscape and ice distribution, offering insights into the continent's evolution and ice sheet modeling.
- It will help study how the ice sheet interacts with the bedrock and how it may behave as global warming continues, helping scientists predict future ice loss and sea-level rise.

- **Do you know?**

- Antarctica is a continent. It is Earth's fifth-largest continent and is covered almost completely in ice. Antarctica covers Earth's South Pole.
- Antarctica has no trees or bushes. The only plants that can survive the extreme cold are lichens, mosses and algae.
- Antarctica is the coldest continent on earth.

# Privilege Motion

- An opposition leader has moved a **privilege motion** against the Minister of State for Rural Development, alleging that he made a false statement regarding the comparative allocation of MGNREGS funds to Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

## Privilege motion

- A **privilege motion** is moved when a Member of Parliament (MP) believes that there has been a **breach of parliamentary privileges**.

-

- It must relate to a **recent incident** and warrant the **intervention** of the House.
- The motion can be **admitted or rejected** by the **Speaker (Lok Sabha)** or **Chairman (Rajya Sabha)**.
- If admitted, it is referred to the **Committee of Privileges**, which:
  - Investigates the matter.
  - May summon witnesses or documents.
  - Submits a report within **one month**.

- The House then **considers the committee's recommendations**, and **penal action** is taken only in **extreme cases**.

### **Distinction from Contempt of the House**

- **Breach of privilege:** Involves violating the special rights of the House or its members.
- **Contempt of the House:** Any act that obstructs the functioning of the House, even if no specific privilege is violated.

- **Parliamentary Privileges**

- Parliamentary privileges are special rights and immunities enjoyed by Parliament and its members, enabling them to discharge their functions independently and effectively.

- Constitutional Backing**

- **Article 105:** Deals with the powers, privileges, and immunities of Parliament and its members.

- **Article 122:** Bars courts from inquiring into the validity of parliamentary proceedings.

# Abel Prize



- Japanese mathematician **Masaki Kashiwara** was awarded this **year's Abel Prize**.
- He was honored with the Abel Prize for his groundbreaking work in **algebraic analysis, representation theory, the development of D-modules**, and the discovery of crystal bases.

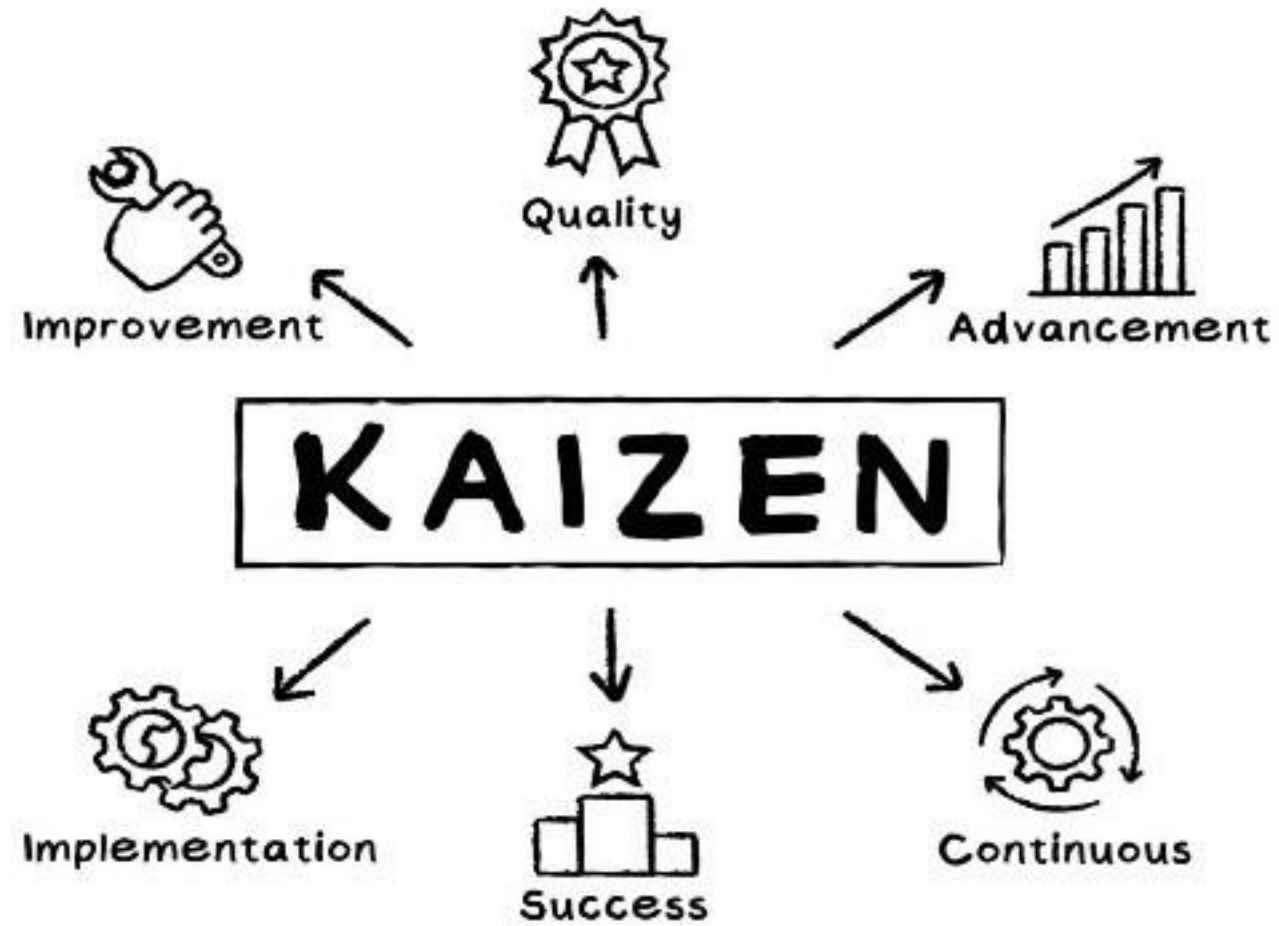
### About Abel Prize

- Named after legendary **Norwegian mathematician Niels Henrik Abel (1802–1829)**, the prize was established by the **Norwegian Parliament in 2002** to commemorate the **200th anniversary of Abel's birth**.

- First awarded in 2003, the Abel Prize is often regarded as the **Nobel Prize equivalent in mathematics**.
- Recipients are selected by a committee appointed by the Academy, in consultation with the International Mathematical Union (IMU) and the European Mathematical Society (EMS).
- The award includes a cash award and a glass plaque designed by Norwegian artist Henrik Haugan.

# Kaizen Philosophy

The Gujarat Administrative Reforms Commission (GARC) submitted its first report recommending the adoption of Kaizen, a Japanese method of continuous improvement, in government operations.



- **What is Kaizen?**

- *Kaizen* translates to “**change for better**” or **continuous improvement**.
- It focuses on **small, consistent improvements** involving **all employees** to improve overall system performance.

- **Core Features of Kaizen:**

- **Continuous Improvement:** Encourages small, incremental changes for long-term efficiency.
- **Employee Involvement:** Every worker is empowered to suggest process improvements.
- **Standardization:** Streamlined procedures to maintain consistency.
- **Waste Elimination (Muda):** Cuts down unnecessary steps, time, or resource use.
- **Customer-Centric Approach:** Enhances service delivery to meet citizen needs

- **Efficient Meetings:** Short, well-structured meetings save administrative time.
- **Employee-Centric Feedback:** Installing QR codes and suggestion boxes promotes participation.
- **Process Improvement:** Upgrading e-Sarkar platforms to improve planning and action-tracking.
- **Infrastructure Modernisation:** AC offices and solar power enhance work environments and sustainability.
- **Smart Governance:** Promotes digital tools, real-time accountability, and performance monitoring.

# Great White Sharks



- A **20-year study in South Africa** reveals that the decline of Great White Sharks disrupted marine ecosystems, causing cascading food web imbalances.



- **Scientific Name:** *Carcharodon carcharias*
- **IUCN Status:** Vulnerable.
- **Habitat & Distribution:**
- Found in **temperate coastal waters**(e.g., USA, South Africa, Australia, Japan).
- Migratory – some travel to tropical waters but return to temperate zones for feeding.

**Adaptations:** Regional endothermy (warm-blooded), serrated teeth, torpedo-shaped body.

- **Food Habits:**

- Hunts seals, dolphins, fish; uses **ambush tactics** (“bite-and-wait”).

-

# Pamban Rail Bridge

Prime Minister of India to **inaugurate India's first vertical-lift railway bridge** on April 6, replacing the 111-year-old Pamban Bridge.

- The new ₹531-crore bridge enhances **maritime safety** and **rail connectivity** to Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu.

- **What was it?**

- A historic railway bridge linking Rameswaram Island to Mandapam (mainland Tamil Nadu).

- **Key Details:**

- **Built in:** 1914 (completed in 2.5 years).
- **Built by:** British India under Madras Railway.





## About New Pamban Bridge:

- Built By: Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) at ₹531 crore.
- Key Features:
  - Vertical-lift span (72 m): First in India, automated for smoother ship movement.
  - Stronger construction: Corrosion-resistant materials for longer durability.
  - Modern Technology: Fully automatic lift mechanism (vs. manual in old bridge).
  - Energy Efficient: Solar-ready design for future sustainability.

## Key Difference between Old and New Pamban Bridge:

<u>Feature</u>	<u>Old Pamban Bridge</u>	<u>New Pamban Bridge</u>
Inauguration Year	1914	2025
Type	Double-leaf bascule	Vertical lift span
Span Control	Manual operation	Automated lift system
Length	2.065 km	2.2 km
Ship Clearance	Limited, slow	Wider and quicker clearance
Lifespan	Over 100 years	Next-generation, corrosion-resistant



10 MCQ from the session

**Q.** Consider the following statements:

1. Donald Trump announced a 25% tariff on imported vehicles and auto components, effective April 3.
2. Japan and Germany are exempted from the new US tariff.
3. The move is expected to impact Tata Motors' subsidiary, Jaguar Land Rover.

• **Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. ATF constitutes 45% of the air ticket price in India.

2. Tamil Nadu levies the lowest VAT on ATF among all Indian states.

3. DGCA requires airlines to submit tariff sheets only at the start of each season.

• **Select the correct answer using the code below:**

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 3 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** With reference to “Green Iron,” consider the following:

- 1.It uses green hydrogen in place of coal for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- 2.It can reduce emissions from 2.2 tons/ton to 300 kg/ton.
- 3.The steel industry contributes 2–3% of global carbon emissions.

• **Which of the above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** Which of the following is true about Bedmap3?

1.It maps the seafloor terrain of the Arctic Ocean.

2.It builds on the data from the earlier Bedmap2 dataset.

3.It includes over 50 million additional data points.

• **Select the correct answer:**

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** Consider the following about Israel's new judicial law:

1. It increases political influence in judge appointments.
2. The law was unanimously passed in the Knesset.
3. The opposition fully supported the reform.

• **Which is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3



**Q.** Which of the following is/are true regarding the Abel Prize?

1.It is awarded by the UN to mathematicians.

2.Masaki Kashiwara won it in 2024 for work in D-modules and crystal bases.

3.It was first awarded in 2003 by the Norwegian Parliament.

• **Select the correct answer:**

A. 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 2 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** Which of the following features apply to Great White Sharks?

- 1.They are listed as “Endangered” by IUCN.
- 2.They exhibit regional endothermy.
- 3.Their decline has led to food chain imbalances.

• **Choose the correct option:**

- A. 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** Regarding parliamentary privilege motions in India, consider:

- 1.It can be admitted or rejected by the Speaker or Chairman.
- 2.It addresses breach of privilege or contempt of court.
- 3.Penal action is often taken in most privilege motions.

• **Correct answer:**

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** Which of the following are features of the Kaizen model adopted by Gujarat?

- 1.Emphasis on incremental improvements.
- 2.Encouraging employee suggestions via QR codes.
- 3.Focus on large, one-time reforms.

• **Correct answer:**

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

**Q.** Regarding the new Pamban Rail Bridge:

- 1.It will be India's first vertical-lift railway bridge.
- 2.It is being constructed by L&T.
- 3.It connects Rameswaram with mainland Tamil Nadu.

• **Correct answer:**

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

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# Word of the day

## **Garble:**

make false by mutilation or addition; as of a message or story

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**Synonyms:** distort, falsify, warp

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**Usage:** *He sent me a rather garbled text yesterday.*

---

**Pronunciation:** [newsth.live/garblepro](http://newsth.live/garblepro)

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## **International Phonetic**

**Alphabet:** /'gɑ:(ɹ)bəl/

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