

Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता



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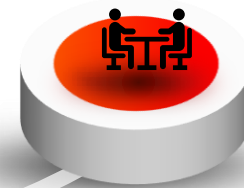
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10 MCQ QUIZ

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 is the key objective of Project VISTAAR launched by IIT Madras and the Ministry of Agriculture?
आईआईटी मद्रास और कृषि मंत्रालय द्वारा शुरू की गई परियोजना विस्तारित का मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है?
- **A. Promote digital education for farmers / किसानों के लिए डिजिटल शिक्षा को बढ़ावा देना**
- **B. Digitize the agricultural extension system / कृषि विस्तार प्रणाली का डिजिटलीकरण करना**
- **C. Enhance exports of agricultural products / कृषि उत्पादों के निर्यात को बढ़ावा देना**
- **D. Develop high-yield crop varieties / उच्च उपज वाली फसल किस्मों का विकास करना**

- What is the base year for the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) revision planned by the Ramesh Chand Committee?
रमेश चंद समिति द्वारा योजना के तहत थोक मूल्य सूचकांक (WPI) के लिए आधार वर्ष क्या है?
- **A. 2004-05**
- **B. 2011-12**
- **C. 2022-23**
- **D. 2025-26**

- What is the architectural significance of the Mubarak Manzil Palace?
मुबारक मंजिल महल की वास्तुशिल्पीय विशेषता क्या है?
- A. Built entirely with white marble / पूरी तरह से सफेद संगमरमर से निर्मित
- B. Reflects a blend of Mughal and British architectural styles / मुगल और ब्रिटिश वास्तुशिल्पीय शैलियों का मिश्रण दर्शाता है
- C. Contains the largest dome in India / भारत में सबसे बड़ा गुंबद शामिल है
- D. Known for its underground tunnels / अपनी भूमिगत सुरंगों के लिए प्रसिद्ध

- What is the projected target for India's banana exports over the next five years?
अगले पांच वर्षों में भारत के केले के निर्यात का अनुमानित लक्ष्य क्या है?
- **A. \$500 million**
- **B. \$750 million**
- **C. \$1 billion**
- **D. \$2 billion**

- Which virus is known as the stomach flu and has caused recent outbreaks in the United States?
कौन सा वायरस पेट फ्लू के रूप में जाना जाता है और हाल ही में संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका में इसके प्रकोप देखे गए हैं?
- **A. Norovirus / नोरोवायरस**
- B. HMPV / एचएमपीवी**
- C. RSV / आरएसवी**
- D. Rotavirus / रोटोवायरस**

- What myth is debunked about adding salt to water?
पानी में नमक डालने से संबंधित कौन सी मिथक को खारिज किया गया है?
- A. It makes water freeze faster / यह पानी को तेजी से जमाता है
- B. It makes water boil faster / यह पानी को तेजी से उबालता है
- C. It prevents water from boiling / यह पानी को उबलने से रोकता है
- D. It decreases the boiling temperature / यह उबाल के तापमान को कम करता है

- What is the estimated cost of China's mega dam project on the Yarlung Tsangpo River?
यारलुंग त्सांगपो नदी पर चीन की मेगा डैम परियोजना की अनुमानित लागत क्या है?
- **A. \$50 billion**
- **B. \$100 billion**
- **C. \$137 billion**
- **D. \$200 billion**

- Which type of Internet connectivity does Air India now offer on domestic flights?
एयर इंडिया अब घरेलू उड़ानों पर कौन सी प्रकार की इंटरनेट कनेक्टिविटी प्रदान करता है?
- **A. Fiber-based Internet / फाइबर आधारित इंटरनेट**
- **B. Air-to-Ground and Satellite-Based Connectivity / एअर-टू-ग्राउंड और सैटेलाइट आधारित कनेक्टिविटी**
- **C. Cellular Tower Networks Only / केवल सेल्युलर टॉवर नेटवर्क**
- **D. High-Speed Fiber Optics / उच्च गति फाइबर ऑप्टिक्स**

- What major challenge was identified for Vande Bharat sleeper trains during trials?
परीक्षणों के दौरान वंदे भारत स्लीपर ट्रेनों के लिए मुख्य चुनौती क्या पहचानी गई?
- **A. Passenger comfort at high speeds / उच्च गति पर यात्रियों की सुविधा**
- **B. Stability of the train / ट्रेन की स्थिरता**
- **C. Arrangement of berths and luggage storage / बर्थ और सामान भंडारण की व्यवस्था**
- **D. Connectivity issues on long-distance routes / लंबी दूरी के मार्गों पर कनेक्टिविटी समस्याएं**

- What technology is primarily used in satellite-based in-flight Internet systems?
सैटेलाइट आधारित इन-फ्लाइट इंटरनेट सिस्टम में मुख्य रूप से कौन सी तकनीक का उपयोग किया जाता है?
- **A. Cellular Towers / सेल्युलर टॉवर**
- **B. Ground Stations and Satellites / ग्राउंड स्टेशन और सैटेलाइट्स**
- **C. Fiber Optics / फाइबर ऑप्टिक्स**
- **D. Microwave Transmission / माइक्रोवेव ट्रांसमिशन**

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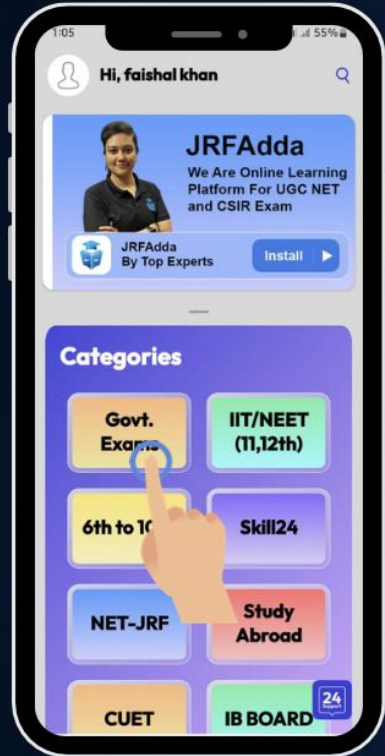
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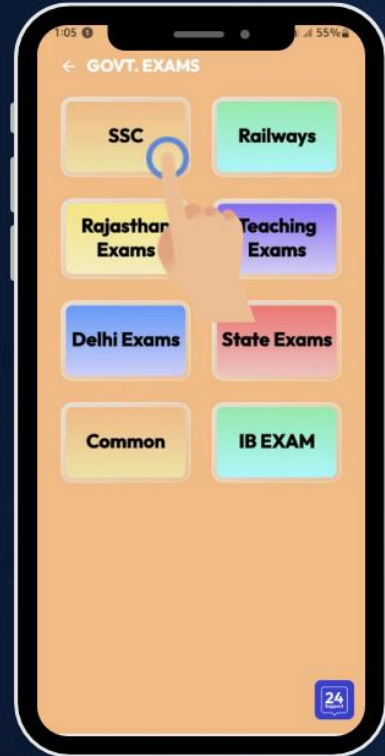
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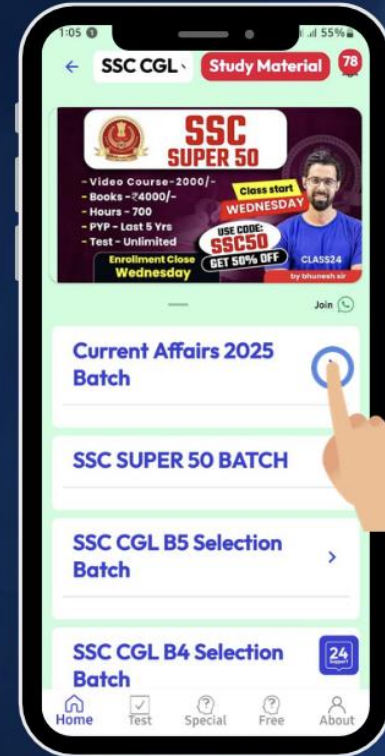
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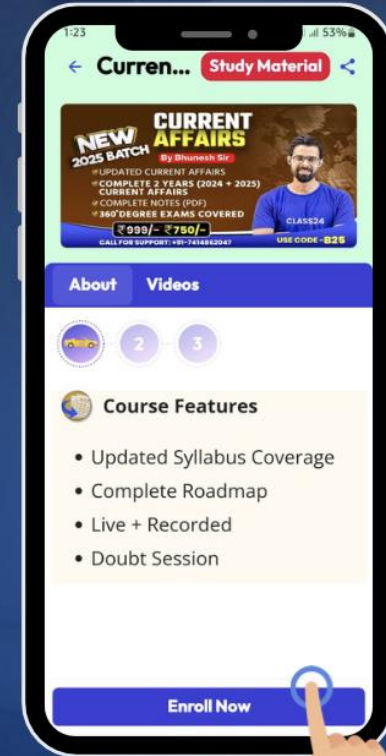
Step 2




Step 3



Step 4





“Simplicity is
the ultimate
sophistication.”

Leonardo da Vinci, cited in Various
works

Simplicity is the
ultimate sophistication

Leonardo da Vinci

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Butter chicken on the shores of Goa

Delhi's rich are descending on Goa, bringing in big-ticket real estate and other changes but locals are not all that thrilled

MAGAZINE'S PAGE 1



Waker-uz-Zaman: The General behind the throne
PROFILES » PAGE 9

R. Chidambaram, doyen of nuclear programme, dies at 88
NEWS » PAGE 5



Border-Gavaskar Trophy final Test tantalisingly poised
SPORT » PAGE 13

INSIDE



Hush-money case: Sentencing for Trump on Jan. 10

NEW YORK
The New York judge presiding over U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's hush-money case on Friday set sentencing 10 days before his January 20 inauguration. » PAGE 12

Cowpea seeds in ISRO mission 'spout in space'

BENGALURU
A batch of cowpea seeds have successfully sprouted in space, days after they were taken into orbit by an ISRO mission. » PAGE 5

New Governor suggests use of NSA in Manipur

At his first security review meeting, Ajay Kumar Bhalla calls for employment opportunities for 'misguided' youth, asks security agencies to prepare dossiers on key suspects fuelling violence and initiate action against them; top officials including Security Adviser and Director-General of Police attend meeting, but Chief Minister was absent

Vijaya Singh
NEW DELHI

A day after assuming charge, Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla held a security review meeting on Saturday and suggested that the State police use legal options such as the National Security Act, 1980, which allows detention for a year without trial, against miscreants and troublemakers, a senior government official told *The Hindu*. Security Adviser Kuldeep Singh, Director-General of Police Rajiv Singh, and other officials attended the unified command meeting, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh was not present. Mr. Bhalla discussed employment opportunities for the "misguided" youth,

and asked the security agencies to prepare dossiers on key suspects who were fuelling violence and initiate action against them. The Central Reserve Police Force and the Border Security Force flagged the violation of ceasefire ground rules by the Pambel faction of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF), the oldest armed Meitei insurgent group, which signed a peace agreement with the Union Home Ministry and Manipur government on November 29, 2023. The group advocates for the secession of Manipur from Myanmar. Around 80 members of the group with 31 weapons had surrendered then. Yaingangpokpi (YKPI) in



Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla chairing a meeting at the Raj Bhavan in Imphal on the law and order situation in Manipur. »

Imphal East, a buffer zone between the valley and hills, has become the latest hotspot of violence in Manipur.

Centre of unrest
The area had witnessed at least 50 incidents of firing since December 24, another government official said.

ice Forces (CAMP) on December 30 at Saibol village, close to YKPI. The official said that YKPI, shaped like a bowl, is surrounded by National Highway 202 (Imphal-Ukhrul) on one side and Khamsuk-Gwalabi reserved forest area on the other. It had often been a problematic area where Kuki-Zo volunteers had set up a bunker at a vantage point after ethnic violence erupted in the State on May 3, 2023. Central security forces removed the bunker and set up a camp in Saibol on December 30. The move was protested by the local women and several of them were in clashes with CAMP personnel. This area did not have any security camp in place earlier.

The camps of Kuki-Zo insurgent groups and Meitei insurgent group UNLF are also located on the periphery of YKPI. Escalating violence A defence source said that a few rounds were fired from bunkers in the valley district of Imphal East towards the Kuki-Zo areas in the hills on December 24, which escalated the violence and the intermittent exchange of fire between the two communities continued till December 29. A joint combing operation was conducted a day later and six bunkers of Kuki-Zo village volunteers were dismantled at Phalmol near YKPI. "Since the Kuki-Zo bunkers are at a height, particularly at Phaimol and Urangpat, the Meiteis feel

threatened and this area in YKPI has seen several instances of firing. The Meitei groups have demanded the removal of the bunkers," said the source. Since June 2023, buffer zones between the valley area where the Meiteis live and the hills where the Kuki-Zos live have been created to stop any kind of clash or arson. The buffer zones are guarded by CAMP personnel. In Kangpokpi, armed cadres of Kuki-Zo insurgent groups that signed a suspension of operations (SoO) peace pact with the government in 2008 were seen roaming the streets on Friday when a mob attacked the district headquarters and SP office. **VESTED INTEREST: CONGO.** » PAGE 4

Tragedy in Bandipora



Fatal fall: Four soldiers were killed as an Army truck skidded off the road and plunged into a gorge in Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT (REPORT ON PAGE 2)

At Mahapanchayat, Dallewal calls upon farmers from all States to join protest

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

With farmers and farm labourer groups continuing their protest at the inter-State boundaries of Punjab and Haryana, a Kisan Mahapanchayat was held at Khanauri in Punjab on Saturday. Farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, whose indefinite fast entered its 40th day, urged farmers across all States to come forward to strengthen the ongoing protests and convey a message to the Union government that the agitation was not of Punjab alone but of the entire nation and they all needed minimum support price (MSP) for their crops. "The government may exert whatever force it



Jagjit Singh Dallewal being assisted on stage during the Kisan Mahapanchayat at Khanauri in Punjab on Saturday. »

wants but eventually, we will win," he said, addressing the gathering from a stage at the protest site, where he was brought out in a stretcher. Meanwhile, Punjab Agriculture Minister Gurneet Singh Khudisan urged Union Agriculture Minister Shriy Singh Chouhan to revive the dialogue bet-

ween the Centre and the protesting farmer unions at the earliest. **State's support** He said the Punjab government supported the farmers' legitimate demands and was enthusiastic about working with the Centre to achieve the goal of "prosperous agriculture".

The call for the Kisan Mahapanchayat was given by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, the umbrella bodies spearheading the agitation in Punjab. Since February 13, 2024, scores of farmers have been camping at the inter-State boundaries between Haryana and Punjab, after being stopped from entering Haryana, enroute to the national capital. In Haryana's Tohana, SKM held another Kisan Mahapanchayat to reject the recently released draft of the National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing. They also expressed deep concern over the deteriorating health condition of the fasting leader Mr. Dallewal.

Bad weather affects nearly 500 flight services from Delhi as heavy fog blankets northern States

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Nearly 500 flights were affected at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, the country's busiest airport, as the season's worst fog yet engulfed the northern parts of India. Till 8 p.m. on Saturday, 412 flights were delayed by over 45 minutes, according to the flight tracking website flightradar 24. Another 45 flights were cancelled, which included those affected by bad weather at the destination airport; 19 flights were di-

verted to alternative airports. Flights were affected in Chandigarh, Shimoga, Guwahati, and Patna as intense foggy conditions prevailed over Punjab, Haryana, parts of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya, and Mizoram. **Low visibility** In Delhi, zero visibility conditions prevailed between 11.30 p.m. on Friday and 8.30 a.m. on Saturday, according to India Meteorological Department scien-



Flight attendants make their way to the Indira Gandhi International Airport on a cold and foggy Saturday morning in Delhi. »

tist R.K. Jenamani. Flight departures and arrivals came to a halt intermittently, as the runway visual range (visibility for pilots in an aircraft aided by lights on the runway) remained between 100 metres and

250 metres throughout, and even dropped to below 50 metres at times, rendering even large aircraft with most advanced navigational aids difficult to land. Between 12.15 a.m. and 1.30 a.m. on Saturday, according to sources, flight operations at the airport were conducted through the day. "Dense fog causing low visibility in the northern belt continues to impact flight operations even during daytime hours," IndiGo posted on X.

Cruise terminal proposed for Great Nicobar Island

Pankaj Sekhsaria

An international cruise terminal to facilitate a "global" port-led city, "high-end" tourism and a ship-breaking yard are among the new additions to the ₹72,000-crore mega-infrastructure project in Great Nicobar Island proposed by the Union Shipping Ministry over the last eight months, according to letters accessed by this writer. The Ministry has also sought 100 acres of land with a seafront for its proposed port. Until now, the government has restricted right to



An aerial view of Andaman and Nicobar. Environmentalists are concerned over development plans for Great Nicobar. GETTY IMAGES

information requests about environment clearances for this mega project, which includes a multi-class airport, on the grounds that it will affect India's security concerns.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 3

Cruise terminal proposed for Great Nicobar Island

Pankaj Sekhsaria

An international cruise terminal to facilitate a “global” port-led city, “high-end” tourism, and a ship-breaking yard are among the new additions to the ₹72,000-crore mega-infrastructure project in Great Nicobar Island proposed by the Union Shipping Ministry over the last eight months, according to letters accessed by this writer. The Ministry has also sought 100 acres of land with a seafront for its proposals.

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An aerial view of Andaman and Nicobar. Environmentalists are concerned over development plans for Great Nicobar. GETTY IMAGES

information requests about environment clearances for this mega project, which includes a military-civil airport, on the grounds that it will affect India’s security concerns.

It is not clear how the Shipping Ministry’s new proposals will be compatible with such concerns.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 3

Ministry proposes cruise terminal and high-end tourism infra on Great Nicobar

Shipping Ministry also seeks 100 acres of land with seafront for shipbuilding, repair facilities, exim port; six-month-long running correspondence has no mention of security and strategic concerns earlier cited by Environment Ministry to deny RTI requests on further details of Great Nicobar project

Pankaj Sekhsaria

The Union Shipping Ministry is making ambitious plans for high-end tourism along with a shipbuilding and repair yard on Great Nicobar Island, according to a series of letters written to the Andaman and Nicobar administration and the Union Home Ministry over the last eight months.

The current ₹72,000-crore project already includes an international container transshipment port proposed at Galathea Bay, an airport, a power plant, and a massive greenfield township and tourism project to be spread over 130 sq. km of land that is now pristine tropical forest. The project is being implemented by the Port Blair-based Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation Ltd (ANIIDCO). The Stage I forest clearance for diversion of 130 sq. km of forest land was granted in October 2022 and followed in November 2022 by environmental and coastal regulation zone (CRZ) clearances.

In April 2024, Rajeev

Kumar, an Under Secretary in the Shipping Ministry, wrote to the Chief Secretary of the A&N administration, asking for 100 acres of land with a 500-metre seafront for ship repair and shipbuilding facilities in Campbell Bay, the administrative headquarters of Great Nicobar Island. In May, he wrote to the A&N Shipping Secretary, to enable Campbell Bay to be declared an exim port to import construction material from neighbouring countries for the transshipment terminal at Galathea Bay.

More recently, on September 18, Shipping Secretary T.K. Ramachandran wrote to the Home Secretary, noting that the vision was “to transform Great Nicobar island into a ‘Global Port-Led City’ with a strategic focus on establishing a ‘sustainable and High-End Eco-tourism Destination’.” He advocated for an international and domestic cruise terminal “to accommodate high-end and domestic tourists”.

The responses, from the A&N Chief Secretary on October 23 and from an ANIIDCO general manager



Experts say that the project will open up Great Nicobar Island to foreign vessels and national and international tourists. GETTY IMAGES

the next day, indicate their reluctance to commit to these proposals. Their letters ask the Shipping Ministry to engage a specialised consultant on its own to explore the techno-economic feasibility of the cruise terminal and to discuss the exim port proposal with the Ministry concerned.

They also argue that ship repair will not be compatible with the purpose of the greenfield township and “could undermine the envisioned water front activities, particularly the tourism infrastructure envisaged for Great Nicobar Island”. In an earlier response in July, ANIIDCO had also noted that the coast-

line comes under a coastal regulation zone (CRZ 1a) as it has coral reefs along almost the entire east coast and that this would be a constraint for ship repair activity.

Requests denied

Concerns have already been raised about the impact of the existing project but multiple requests for more details have been denied under Section 8(1)(a) of the RTI Act that invokes issues of sovereignty, integrity, security, and the strategic concerns of the country. In November 2022, Mumbai-based researcher Prasad Kale had filed an RTI application asking the

Environment Ministry for information related to the clearances granted to the project.

The Ministry refused, invoking Section 8(1)(a) and also relying on a Ministry of Home Affairs order stating that the proposed airport was a dual-use military-civil facility which will come under the operational control of the Indian Navy. This argument was upheld by the Central Information Commissioner in its June 2024 order.

“It is strange that information about these projects is being denied on grounds of sovereignty and integrity of India, and security and strategic interests,” says Debi Goenka of the Conservation Action Trust, which has challenged the project before the National Green Tribunal. “At the most, information about the airport could have been excluded but there is no rationale for refusing to divulge information about the other three.”

Given the Home Ministry’s stance and the consistent denial of information on the grounds that the project required secrecy

because of its strategic location and security concerns, the Shipping Ministry’s recent proposals stand out. There is no mention anywhere in the Ministry’s six-month-long running correspondence about these strategic concerns that have been used to deny information about the environment and other risks. It also does not account for the fact that many of these activities – such as ship breaking, a cruise terminal and high-end international tourism – are themselves contrary to this strategic purpose. Emails sent to officials in the Shipping Ministry and ANIIDCO seeking their clarification in the matter did not receive any response.

These projects, Mr. Goenka notes, will open up Great Nicobar Island to foreign vessels and national and international tourists. “The policy followed since Independence of keeping Great Nicobar Island isolated from foreigners will be overturned,” he warns.

(Pankaj Sekhsaria is an author and editor whose most recent work is The Great Nicobar Betrayal)

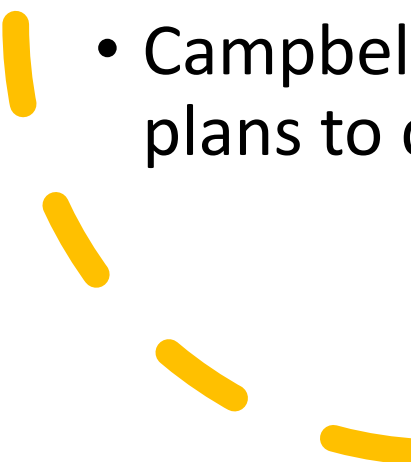
Proposal for Cruise Terminal and High-End Tourism on Great Nicobar Island

जहाजरानी मंत्रालय ने ग्रेट निकोबार द्वीप पर क्रूज टर्मिनल और हाई-एंड पर्यटन बुनियादी ढांचे के निर्माण की महत्वाकांक्षी योजना बनाई है।

The project is part of a ₹72,000 crore investment plan, which includes an international container transshipment terminal, airport, power plant, and eco-friendly tourism infrastructure

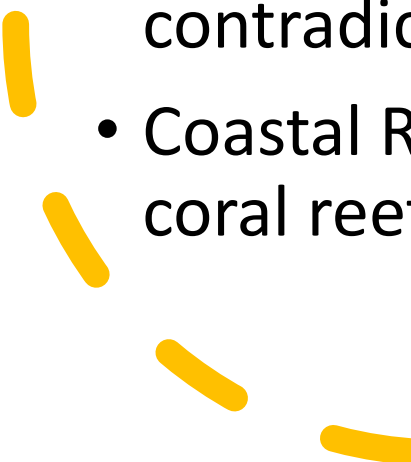


- **Key Features and Scope:**

- योजना के अंतर्गत 100 एकड़ भूमि और 500 मीटर समुद्री किनारे को जहाज निर्माण और मरम्मत यार्ड के लिए विकसित किया जाएगा।
 - Includes a greenfield township and aims to transform the island into a "Global Port-Led City" with sustainable and eco-tourism destinations.
 - Campbell Bay will serve as the administrative headquarters, with plans to develop an import port for construction materials.
- 






- **Environmental Concerns:**

- पर्यावरण मंत्रालय ने 130 वर्ग किलोमीटर के जंगल को साफ करने की मंजूरी दी है, लेकिन इस परियोजना के पर्यावरणीय और सुरक्षा प्रभावों को लेकर चिंता बनी हुई है।
 - Critics argue that activities like shipbreaking and large-scale tourism contradict the island's ecological sensitivity.
 - Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) concerns have also been raised due to coral reefs along the coast, which might be adversely affected.
- 



- **Strategic and Security Context:**

- यह द्वीप अपनी सामरिक स्थिति के कारण महत्वपूर्ण है और भारत-चीन संबंधों के संदर्भ में इसकी रणनीतिक भूमिका है।
 - The proposed airport will have dual-use functionality, serving both military and civilian purposes under the operational control of the Indian Navy.
- 

- 
- **Requests and Opposition:**
 - राष्ट्रीय ग्रीन ट्रिब्यूनल और अन्य संगठनों ने इस परियोजना पर पारदर्शिता और दीर्घकालिक प्रभावों की कमी पर सवाल उठाए हैं।
 - Environmental activists have filed RTI requests to seek clarity on risks, but information has been denied citing sovereignty and strategic concerns.
- 

Historical, Geographical, Political, and Economic Points:

Historical Context:

- ग्रेट निकोबार द्वीप का इतिहास द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के दौरान एक रणनीतिक ठिकाने के रूप में देखा गया था।
- Its strategic importance has increased due to its proximity to the Malacca Strait, a vital maritime route.

Geographical Impact:

- द्वीप अपनी जैव विविधता और संवेदनशील पर्यावरण के लिए जाना जाता है।
 - It is home to unique flora and fauna, including endemic species like the Nicobar megapode, which could be threatened by large-scale development.
-

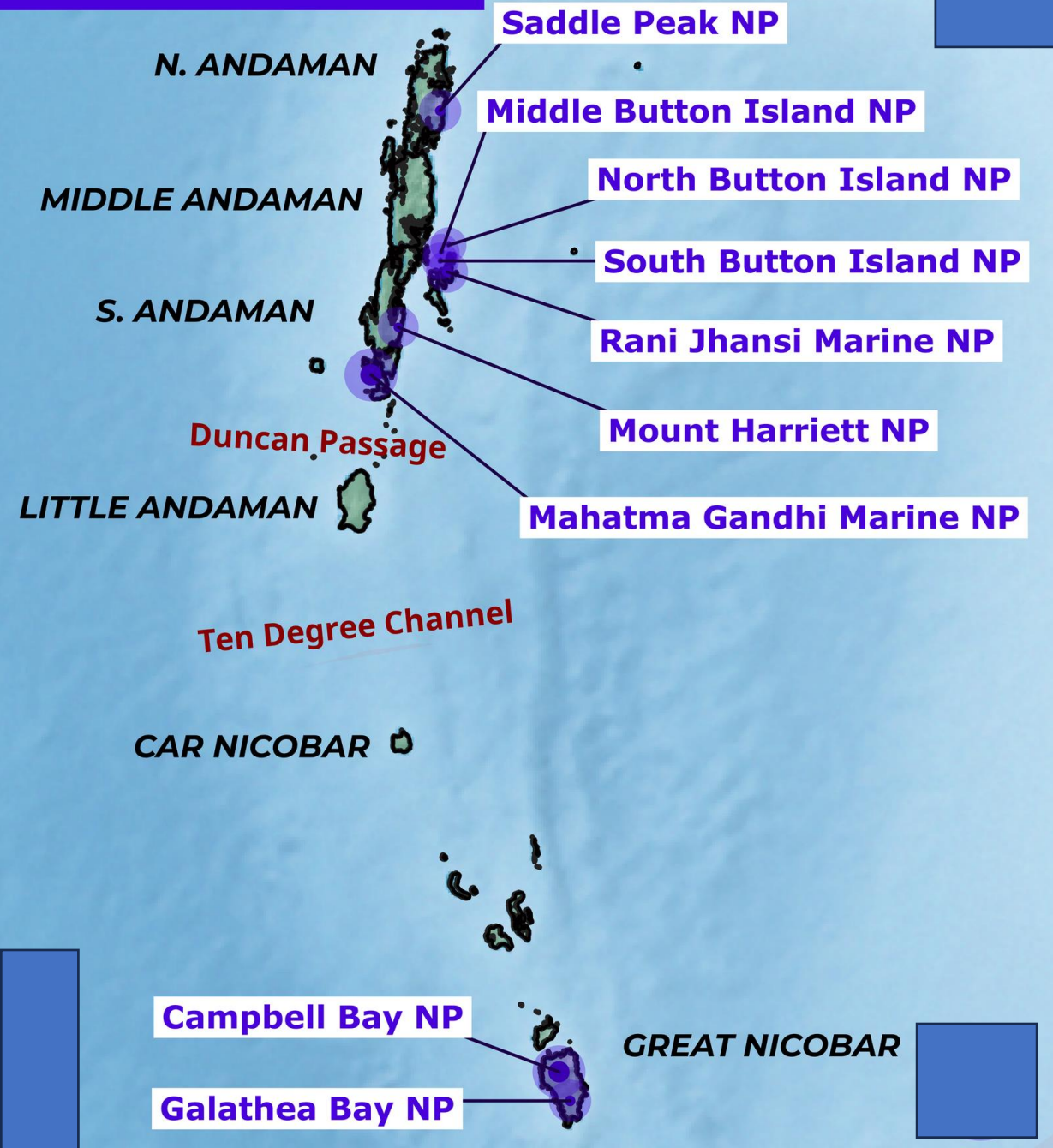
Political Implications:

- परियोजना भारत की हिंद-प्रशांत रणनीति के तहत भारत के समुद्री प्रभुत्व को मजबूत करने की दिशा में एक कदम है।
- This development aligns with India's broader geopolitical ambitions to counter China's influence in the region.

Economic Benefits:

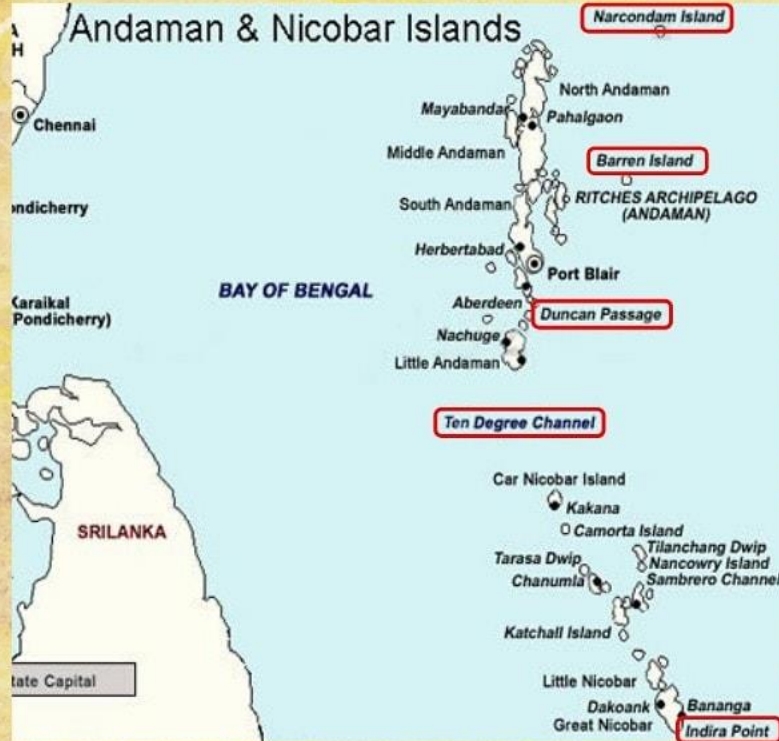
- यह परियोजना व्यापार, पर्यटन और स्थानीय रोजगार के अवसरों को बढ़ावा देने के लिए एक बड़ा कदम है।
- The container transshipment terminal and cruise terminal are expected to boost India's trade capacity and position it as a maritime hub.

Andaman & Nicobar Is.





ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS



- Andaman and Nicobar Islands is a Union territory of India comprising 572 islands of which 37 are inhabited located in Bay of Bengal.
- **Important Islands:** North Andaman, Middle Andaman, South Andaman, Little Andaman, Car Nicobar, Little Nicobar, and Great Nicobar.
- **Duncan Pass:** It separates Rutland Island (Part of South Andaman) and Little Andaman.
- **Ten Degree Channel:** It is a channel that separates the Andaman Islands and Nicobar Islands.
- **Indira Point:** It is the Southernmost Point in Great Nicobar Island in the Andaman Sea.
- **Active Volcanoes:** The Barren and Narcondam islands are volcanic islands. Recently eruption is seen in Barren islands.

- **Highest Peaks:** Saddle Peak is the highest peak in North Andaman Island and Mount Thuillier is the highest peak in Great Nicobar Island.
- **New names:** Ross Island is renamed as Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Island; Neil Island as Shaheed Island; and Havelock Island as Swaraj Island.

QUICK FACTS

6 aboriginal tribes are seen - Andamanese, Onge, Jarawa and Sentinelese are Negrito while Nicobarese and Shompen are Mongoloid.

Campbell Bay National Park, Galathea Bay National Park, Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park and Rani Jhansi Marine National Park are few important national parks.

Coco Islands are a small group of islands in the north eastern Bay of Bengal. They are part of Myanmar.

IN BRIEF



Amid temple row, PM offers chadar at Ajmer dargah

A ceremonial chadar (sheet of cloth) on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was offered on Saturday at the dargah of Sufi mystic Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer during the 833th Urs, commemorating the saint's death anniversary. Union Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju presented chadar at the shrine. He read out Mr. Modi's message on the occasion, laying emphasis on communal harmony in India. The chadar was offered at the shrine amid the claims about the existence of a Lord Shiva temple at the site of the dargah. A civil court in Ajmer had on November 27 issued notices on a suit seeking declaration of the dargah as a temple.

Former sub-inspector held in passport fraud case in Kolkata

The Kolkata police arrested a retired police sub-inspector on Friday in connection with an alleged passport scam in the city. According to the police, the accused used to work with verification processes in the Police Department's Passport Section. Police officials said that 61-year-old Abdul Hal was arrested from his residence at Kanpurpur in North 24 Parganas in connection with the probe surrounding the recently discovered fake passport ring. The police said at least 150 Indian passports were found to have been issued, including to Bangladeshi nationals, with the help of fraudulent documents by the racket.

Govt. permits export of 2 lakh tonnes of wheat to Nepal

The government has permitted the export of two lakh tonnes of wheat to Nepal, a notification issued on Saturday said. The export is permitted through National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL), the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). Though the export of wheat is banned to maintain domestic supply, outbound shipments are allowed on the basis of permission granted by the government to certain countries to meet their food security needs and on request. DGFT said inputs imported for synthetic knitted fabrics by advance authorisation holders, export-oriented units and special economic zones are exempted from minimum import condition.

NIA chargesheets 4 members of CPI(Maoist) for murder

The National Investigative Agency (NIA) chargesheeted four members of banned Communist Party of India (Maoist) for abducting and killing a Maharashtra youth, Dinesh Pusus Gawde, for allegedly being a police informer and a member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), according to an official statement released on Friday. The arrested persons, Doda Wade, Ravi Pallo, Sartu Mahaka and Komati Mahaka, were accused of the abduction and murder. The NIA said that the accused persons were active CPI(Maoist) members and they had also committed crimes allegedly to spread terror in the minds of local villagers.

SUDOKU

Difficulty Rating: ★★★★★

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

Experts hopeful, but flag data localisation, parental nod plans

They find the draft as leaving the door open for government to restrict the overseas processing of Indians' data; the rules mandate that platforms verify parents' identity first for minors to sign up for online services, raising concern

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Experts working with the tech industry tentatively welcomed the draft Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, issued on Friday. The draft rules document "gives broad direction to the industry to start preparing for compliance", Aparajita Bharti, a founding partner at TQI Consulting, which works with tech companies in complying with Indian laws, said in a statement. "It is encouraging to finally witness progress on this front," Shreya Sippy, a senior partner at IndusLaw, said in a statement.

They highlighted gaps, but they hope that the ensuing consultation process will resolve them. Industry associations have so far not directly commented on the draft. "The draft rules provide some clarity on framing and displaying notices [to users, or "data principals"]



under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, but they fall short in offering guidance on the mode of delivery or issuance — something well-defined under GDPR," Ms. Suri said, referring to Europe's General Data Protection Regulation. "One key concern in the rules is potential room for bringing data localisation requirements for significant data. Educators also mention that a committee may do so in the future," Ms. Bharti said, referring to the draft leaving the door open for the go-

vernment to restrict the overseas processing of Indians' data. Tech companies are likely to seek particular clarity on this front, as they usually store and process user data in servers around the world. Parental consent The draft rules around minors having to get parental consent to sign up for online services raised some eyebrows, as the rules mandate that platforms verify parents' identity first. "How do you know if someone is a parent or not,"

Nikhil Pahwa, editor of the tech policy website MediaNama, asked. "This could mean that 'platforms will have to verify EVERYONE,'

works specifically tailored for AI model training purposes." The Internet Freedom Foundation flagged a lack of specificity in the draft, saying in a statement that terms such as "reasonable safeguards", "appropriate measures", or "necessary measures" are used without adequate elaboration in the text. Since the Data Protection Board will not be a fully independent entity, the IFF added, "large parts of the implementation and enforcement will be administered by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology raising apprehension." "We want to ensure that in finality, the age verification process, complaints and enforcement are easier for people and not yet another burdensome run-around with no recourse where their data is illegally collected, used, shared and sold," said Mihir Choudhary, founder of the New Delhi-based Software Freedom Law Centre said.

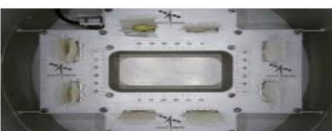
Exemption concerns The DDPD Act, 2023 already exempts government organisations from the law, and the Rules set out the "standards" for such exemptions. However, Ms. Bharti said, "The draft rules do not explicitly address exemptions, processing grounds, or other frame-

Cowpea seeds sprout in space, and first robotic arm operation, says ISRO

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A batch of cowpea seeds — better known as *lobia* in Hindi or *chattapoyaru* in Kannada — have successfully sprouted in space, days after they were taken into orbit by an Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) mission. The space agency has also successfully operated India's first space robotic arm, it announced on Saturday.

The two experiments were part of the 24 payloads flown on the PSLV-C60 Spadha mission's PS4-Orbital Experiment Module (POEM-4) on December 30. In a series of posts on X, ISRO said, "Life grows in space." The CROPS (Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies) experiment on board PSLV-C60 POEM-4 successfully sprouted cowpea seeds in 4 days. Leaves expected to appear in 10-15 days. "eRRM-2D, India's first space robotic arm, is in action onboard #POEM4! A



Sprouting seeds: The experiment plans to grow eight cowpea seeds in a closed-box environment with active thermal control. ISRO

phase platform to develop and evolve ISRO's capabilities for growing and sustaining flora in extraterrestrial environments. "The Relocatable Robotic Manipulator Technology Demonstrator (eRRM-TD) a 7 Degree of Freedom (DoF) robotic arm that will perform relocation through the inchworm walking to defined targets on the POEM-4 platform."

Growing crops in space The CROPS payload, developed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), is envisioned as a multi-

Naval vessel Tarini with two women officers starts new leg of circumnavigation

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) *Tarini* left Lyttelton Port in New Zealand on Saturday morning at about 9.30 a.m. local time for Port Stanley in Falkland Islands in the third leg of the ongoing global circumnavigation journey by two-woman Navy officers under Navin Singh's leadership.

This is the longest leg of the expedition with a distance of approximately 5,600 nautical miles (approximately 10,400 km) to cover. This will also be the southernmost transit of *Tarini* at about 56 degrees South, the Navy said in a statement. "With the frontal weather systems in the Southern Ocean, Team *Tarini* can expect to experience challenging seas with up to 50-60 knots (90-110 kmph) winds." The *Tarini* had arrived in Lyttelton on December 22, completing the second leg of the double-handed



Miles to go: Lt. Cdr. Dilna K. and Lt. Cdr. Roopa A. have 5,600 nm to cover from Lyttelton Port in to Port Stanley. SP/ICL/ARNAV/062521

circumnavigation, which is being undertaken by two Indian Navy women officers — Lt. Cdr. Dilna K. and Lt. Cdr. Roopa A. "During the period in Lyttelton, the crew undertook repairs and maintenance of the boat with particular focus on the next leg where the vessel will pass through the treacherous Drake Passage, and cross Cape Horn to reach Port Stanley," the Navy said. "While in Lyttelton, the crew also interacted with the Indian community who were eager to visit

Personal data rules balance regulation, innovation'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Digital Personal Data Protection Rules drafted by the government create a balance between regulation and innovation while protecting citizens' rights, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Saturday. The government issued draft rules for the Digital Personal Data Protection Act on Friday for public consultation till February 18. "Rules have to be within four walls of the Act. It is within the ambit of the Act passed by Parliament. These rules have been framed to ensure a balance between regulation and innovation while completely safeguarding the rights of citizens," Mr. Vaishnaw said. He said earlier there was only one template available to the world — the European data protection rule but Indian rules have tried to balance regulation with innovation to safeguard the boom in innovation ecosystem developing among start-ups in the country.

Chidambaram, doyen of nuclear programme, no more

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Rajagopala Chidambaram, 88, former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission who was involved in both of India's nuclear tests in 1974 and in 1998, died in Jaslok Hospital in Mumbai on Saturday. He was the longest serving Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Indian govt. with a tenure from 2002 to 2018.

An atomic energy scientist who spent his whole career with the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and its affiliated agencies, Dr. Chidambaram was the nuclear scientist whose professional history was intertwined with the history of India's nuclear ambitions. In 1974, he was part of an operation, codenamed 'Smiling Buddha', which was carried out in great se-

crecy as a "peaceful nuclear test" at Pokhran, Rajasthan. This made India the sixth country to test a nuclear device, though it invited international criticism, particularly from Canada and the U.S. The plutonium test in 1998, known as the Cirus reactor at the Shaha Atomic Research Centre in Mumbai, which was supplied by Canada, and heavy water from the U.S.

Operation Shakti In 1998, as the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, he led a similar operation, again at Pokhran, to detonate four nuclear fission and one nuclear fusion bomb on May 11 of that year. Called Operation Shakti, this was a more explicitly military test and invited international sanctions, and led to a six-month nuclear test ban by Pakistan in the same month.



DR. CHIDAMBARAM (1936 - 2025)

The second Pokhran test, which exploded bombs far more powerful than those in 1974, underlined India's credentials as a military nuclear power, but the denial of critical technologies needed for civilian programme has critics, to this day, debating its secondary impact. Nuclear sanctions following this were effec-

energy, and strategic technologies. As Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet, he championed advanced concepts in energy security, materials science, supercomputing, and nanotechnology. He served as PSA from the Office of the PSA.

"Visionary leadership" Dr. Chidambaram's unparalleled contributions to India's scientific and strategic capabilities and his visionary leadership in science and technology were widely appreciated and honored. He was a man of great learning and erudition in diverse disciplines. Meeting and listening to him was always a deep education. Behind that steely ex-

terior, he had a wonderful sense of humour. Dr. Chidambaram was intellectually very active till his end. People like him are very, very rare," Mr. Ramesh said in a post on the social media platform X. As the PSA, Dr. Chidambaram stressed the importance of combining basic research and technological applications through an approach called "directed to basic research". His tenure as PSA saw the launch of several initiatives, including the Rural Technology Action Group (RuTAG), which empowered rural communities through innovative technologies; the Society for Atomic Transactions and Security (SETS) to contribute towards advancing India's cybersecurity and hardware security infrastructure; a press note from the Office of the PSA said.

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tively lifted only after the Indo-U.S. civil nuclear deal championed by the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and U.S. President George Bush in 2008.

A recipient of the Padma Shri (1975) and Padma Vibushan (1999), Dr. Chidambaram contributed significantly to condensed matter physics, nuclear

energy, and strategic technologies. As Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet, he championed advancements in energy security, materials science, supercomputing, and nanotechnology, says a statement from the Office of the PSA.

'Visionary leadership'

"Dr Chidambaram's unparalleled contributions to India's scientific and strategic capabilities and his visionary leadership in science and technology will forever be remembered," the DAE said in a statement.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh described him as among the titans of Indian science and technology. "He was a man of great learning and erudition in diverse disciplines. Meeting and listening to him was always a deep education. Behind that steely ex-

terior, he had a wonderful sense of humour. Dr. Chidambaram was intellectually very active till his end. People like him are very, very rare," Mr. Ramesh said in a post on the social media platform X.

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- **R. Chidambaram, Architect of India's Nuclear Programme, Passes Away**
- **Life and Contributions:**
- डॉ. आर. चिदंबरम, भारत के परमाणु ऊर्जा आयोग (Atomic Energy Commission) के पूर्व अध्यक्ष और देश के दो परमाणु परीक्षणों (1974 और 1998) में शामिल, का मुंबई में निधन हो गया।
- R. Chidambaram, an atomic scientist and former Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India (2002–2018), passed away in Mumbai.

Key Achievements:

1974 Nuclear Test ('Smiling Buddha'):

- 1974 में पोखरण में भारत का पहला "शांतिपूर्ण परमाणु परीक्षण" हुआ, जिसमें डॉ. चिदंबरम की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका रही।
- The test established India as the sixth country to conduct nuclear tests, despite international condemnation.

- **1998 Nuclear Test ('Operation Shakti'):**
- 1998 में, पोखरण में चार न्यूक्लियर फिशन और एक फ्यूजन बम के परीक्षणों का नेतृत्व किया।
- As Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, he oversaw these tests, which cemented India's status as a nuclear power.
- **Advancements in Science and Technology:**
- वैज्ञानिक सलाहकार समिति के अध्यक्ष के रूप में, उन्होंने ऊर्जा सुरक्षा, सुपरकंप्यूटिंग, नैनोटेक्नोलॉजी, और सामरिक प्रौद्योगिकी में योगदान दिया।
- Promoted materials science, strategic technologies, and cybersecurity through innovative programs.

Awards and Recognition:

पद्म श्री (1975) और पद्म विभूषण
(1999) से सम्मानित।

Recipient of prestigious awards for his contribution to condensed matter physics, nuclear science, and strategic research.

Historical, Scientific, and Political Points:


Historical Context:

- भारत के परमाणु कार्यक्रम का विकास 1940 के दशक में शुरू हुआ, लेकिन डॉ. चिदंबरम ने 1970 और 1990 के दशक में इसे नई ऊंचाइयों पर पहुंचाया।
- His role was instrumental in defining India's nuclear ambitions post-independence.

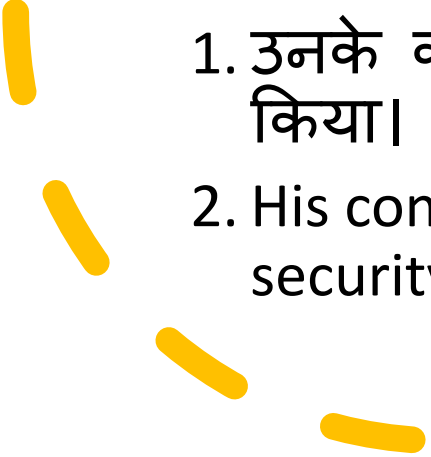
Scientific Contributions:

- परमाणु भौतिकी और सामरिक विज्ञान के क्षेत्रों में उन्होंने कई अग्रणी शोध किए।
- Worked extensively on condensed matter physics, nuclear energy, and cybersecurity.

Political Significance:

- 
1. 1998 के परीक्षणों ने भारत को एक सैन्य परमाणु शक्ति के रूप में स्थापित किया, लेकिन यह अमेरिका और अन्य देशों से प्रतिबंधों का कारण भी बना।
 2. The 1998 nuclear tests positioned India as a military nuclear power but led to international sanctions, later lifted by the 2008 Indo-US nuclear deal.

1.Global and National Impact:

- 
1. उनके कार्य ने भारत की ऊर्जा आत्मनिर्भरता और सामरिक क्षमता को सशक्त किया।
 2. His contributions strengthened India's strategic autonomy and energy security.

4,200 cases, ₹25cr refunds: Fee complaints jump at pvt univs

Out Of 5 Years, 50% Of These Filed Last Year

Manash.Gohain
@timesofindia.com

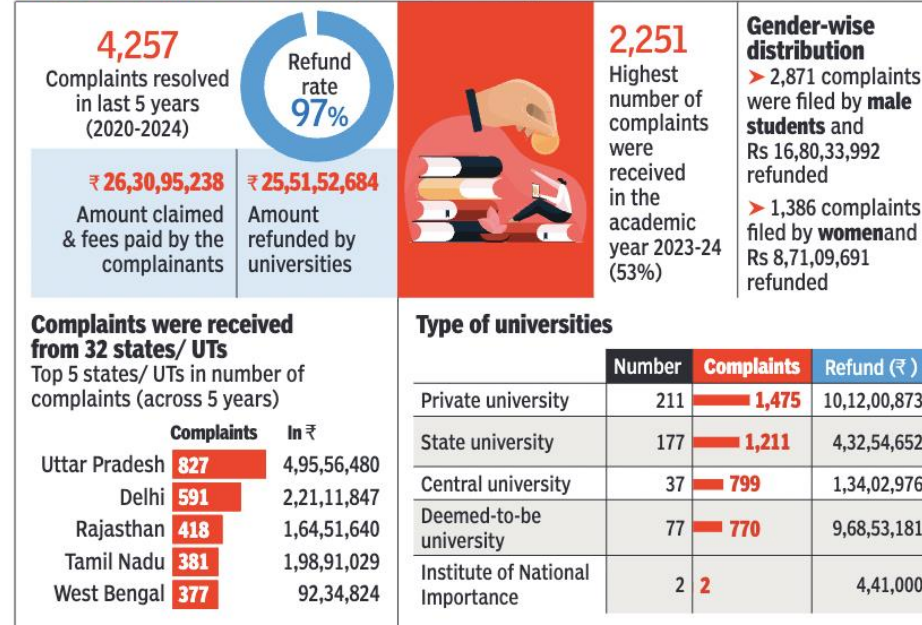
New Delhi: Private universities have emerged as the leading category for complaints regarding fee-related practices, underscoring the necessity for closer examination of their fee structures.

Data from UGC's Fee Nivaran Cell shows 4,257 complaints were resolved in past five academic years, resulting in refunds totaling over Rs 25.5 crore. This trend highlights an increase in fee-related irregularities across higher educational institutions (HEIs), with over 50% of complaints filed in academic year 2023-24 alone. Among states, UP registered highest number of complaints, followed by Delhi and Rajasthan.

Fee Nivaran Cell operates under UGC's e-Samadhaan platform, enabling students to file grievances and seek redressal. UGC officials said rising complaint numbers reflect the system's growing effectiveness and its role in ensuring transparency in HEI practices.

UGC chairperson M Jagadeh Kumar emphasised the cell's success, noting a refund

MOST COMPLAINTS FROM UP, DELHI



rate of around 97%. He said: "It has processed complaints from 32 states and UTs, with 1,386 female students benefiting from refunds amounting to Rs 8.71 crore. Our efforts have extended to all types of HEIs — central, state, private, deemed universities, and even institutes of national importance. Private universities accounted for highest number of complaints, reflecting the need for continued vigilance in this sector."

UGC started Fee Nivaran Cell in 2020 during Covid as an initiative to promote trust

in higher education system while alleviating undue financial burdens on students.

Private universities accounted for largest share of complaints, with 1,475 cases resolved and refunds totaling over Rs 10.12 crore. State universities followed with 1,211 resolved cases and refunds of Rs 4.32 crore, while deemed to be universities addressed 770 complaints with refunds exceeding Rs 9.68 crore. Central universities resolved 799 complaints, issuing refunds of Rs 1.34 crore, and institutes of na-

tional importance resolved two complaints, refunding Rs 4.41 lakh.

Geographically, UP led in complaints, with 827 cases resolved and refunds totaling nearly Rs 4.96 crore. Delhi followed with 591 complaints and refunds of over Rs 2.21 crore, while Rajasthan resolved 418 cases with refunds amounting to Rs 1.65 crore. Tamil Nadu and Bengal also featured prominently, with 381 and 377 complaints resolved, resulting in refunds of Rs 1.99 crore and Rs 0.92 crore, respectively.



- **4,200 Fee Complaints and ₹25 Crore Refunds at Private Universities**

- **Overview:**

- पिछले 5 वर्षों में (2020-2024), UGC के "फीस निवारण सेल" ने 4,257 शिकायतों का निपटारा किया, जिसमें ₹25.5 करोड़ से अधिक की राशि वापस की गई।



- Over the past five years, UGC's Fee Nivaran Cell resolved 4,257 complaints, leading to refunds exceeding ₹25.5 crore.




- **Key Trends and Statistics:**

- 1.High Refund Rate:**

1. कुल 97% शिकायतों का समाधान किया गया।
2. A refund rate of 97% was achieved, benefiting numerous students.

- 2.Geographical Distribution:**

1. उत्तर प्रदेश में सबसे अधिक 827 शिकायतें दर्ज की गईं, जिसके बाद दिल्ली (591), राजस्थान (418), तमिलनाडु (381), और पश्चिम बंगाल (327) हैं।
 2. Most complaints were from Uttar Pradesh (827), followed by Delhi (591), Rajasthan (418), Tamil Nadu (381), and West Bengal (327).
- 

1. University Types:

1. निजी विश्वविद्यालयों में 1,475 शिकायतें दर्ज की गईं, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप ₹10.12 करोड़ की धनराशि वापस की गई।
2. Private universities accounted for the largest share, with 1,475 complaints and ₹10.12 crore refunded.

2. Gender Distribution:

1. 2,871 शिकायतें पुरुष छात्रों द्वारा और 1,386 महिलाओं द्वारा दर्ज की गईं।
2. Male students filed 2,871 complaints, and female students filed 1,386.



UGC अधिकारियों ने कहा कि शिकायतें बढ़ने से उच्च शिक्षा संस्थानों (HEIs) की फीस संरचना की जांच की आवश्यकता उजागर हुई।

Officials noted that the rise in complaints highlights the need for stricter oversight of fee structures in HEIs.



Historical, Geographical, Political, and Economic Points:

Historical Context:

- UGC का "फीस निवारण सेल" 2020 में शुरू हुआ, ताकि छात्रों को शुल्क-विवाद के मामलों में राहत प्रदान की जा सके।
- The Fee Nivaran Cell was launched in 2020 to provide students with a platform to address fee-related grievances.

Geographical Distribution:


- उत्तर प्रदेश और दिल्ली जैसे राज्यों में उच्च संख्या इस क्षेत्र में उच्च शिक्षा के बढ़ते महत्व और संस्थानों की अधिक संख्या को दर्शाती है।
- States like Uttar Pradesh and Delhi lead in complaints due to the concentration of private universities and growing demand for higher education.



- **Political Significance:**

- निजी विश्वविद्यालयों के लिए सरकार की नीतियां और नियामक सुधार इस मुद्दे पर प्रभाव डाल सकते हैं।
- Government regulations on private universities will play a crucial role in addressing fee-related irregularities.

- **Economic Impact:**

- ₹25.5 करोड़ की धनवापसी से छात्रों पर वित्तीय दबाव कम हुआ है, खासकर COVID-19 महामारी के बाद।
 - Refunds of ₹25.5 crore have alleviated financial burdens on students, especially post-COVID.
- 



MODI RALLY
PM says AAP will be ousted from Delhi
NEWS » PAGE 5



PROTESTS GROW STRONGER
Farm outfits seek Modi's intervention to save Dallewal
NEWS » PAGE 4



HITISH ON RJD
'Made the mistake twice, will not repeat'
NEWS » PAGE 5



DATA POINT
Sharp fall in Madrasa enrolments
Disproportionate drops need scrutiny
OPINION » PAGE 9



DOUBLE DELIGHT
Australia wins Sydney Test, enters WTC final
SPORT » PAGE 16

INSIDE



Data rules: gov. promises time for compliance

NEW DELHI
Adequate time will be given to all stakeholders for the smooth transition to achieve compliance with Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, Centre said on Sunday. » PAGE 5

'Set up panel to review Great Nicobar project'

NEW DELHI
The Congress on Sunday said the Prime Minister should set up an independent panel to review the Great Nicobar Island project. » PAGE 4

Tribal festival



Beleaguere times: Members of the Toda tribe in the Nilgiris gather around a 'moonbo' (head) temple in the Muthanad 'mund' (hamlet) in Udhangamandalam on Sunday to celebrate the Midwinter festival and discuss plans for the year ahead. M. SATYANARAYAN

Quarantine animals with symptoms of avian flu, Centre tells States after deaths of tiger, leopard

A.M. Higesah
NEW DELHI

With Maharashtra reporting India's first case of avian influenza among animals, the Union Animal Husbandry Ministry sent a circular to all States on Sunday, urging them to quarantine infected or symptomatic tigers and other feline species to prevent transmission to humans and other animals.

Three tigers and one leopard died of the H5N1 virus, better known as bird flu, at an animal rescue centre in Nagpur in the last week of December.

Avian influenza is crossing the species barrier, Union Animal Husbandry Commissioner Abhijit Mitra told *The Hindu* on Sunday. Citing cases in the U.S.



Infection alert: Avian influenza has been found in cattle and goats, as well as in wild species, particularly tigers.

treating them. The National Joint Outbreak Response Team has reached there and is implementing the steps to be taken in such a scenario," he said, adding that the Ministry will issue detailed guidelines on the matter within a week.

The Ministry is also examining the reasons for the infection.

"The animals are in a rescue centre. Maybe the chicken served to them could be the reason for the disease. We are examining that and have alerted the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change too," Dr. Mitra said, adding that there is no need to panic at present. "The human beings who came in touch with the animals during the treatment and the post-mortem are also

Defence deals in last leg ahead of PM's Paris visit

Modi has been invited to visit AI summit in France on February 10 and 11; deals to include purchase of 26 Rafale-M fighter jets, three Scorpene-class conventional submarines government-to-government deals worth over \$10 billion likely to be placed for approval before the Cabinet Committee on Security in the next couple of weeks, sources say.

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The two large defence deals in the pipeline between India and France are being finalised, amid expectations that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Paris in February for the Artificial Intelligence Action Summit to be hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron.

The deals, together worth over \$10 billion, will include the purchase of 26 Rafale-M fighter jets for the Indian Navy's aircraft carriers, and three additional Scorpene-class conventional submarines. The two deals are expected to be put before the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) for approval in the



Shopping list
As Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to be in Paris in February, India is looking to seal arms deals.

formalities of the acquisition process and we expect that if not this month, next month, hopefully, this (Scorpene submarine) and the Rafale-M deal should be signed," he had said.

On July 13, 2023, as Mr. Modi was enroute to Paris, the Defence Acquisition Council chaired by the defence Minister Rajnath Singh accorded the Acceptance of Necessity for the procurement of 26 Rafale-M fighters and three additional Scorpene-class diesel-electric submarines.

The Rafale purchase includes 22 single seater Rafale-M jets and four twin-seater Rafale trainers, which are not carrier compatible. The 26 jets are meant to fill a critical gap

until the indigenous twin engine deck-based fighter, still under development, is ready to be inducted into service. The Navy currently operates two aircraft carriers: INS Vikramaditya procured from Russia, and the indigenously built INS Vikrant which was commissioned in September 2022.

The additional Scorpene is a critical requirement for the Navy as it grapples with an ageing fleet and the huge delay in the procurement of six advanced submarines under Project-75I which is now awaiting a final decision between Germany and Spain. As reported by *The Hindu* earlier, the first of three Scorpene submarines is likely to be delivered in 2031.

Tamil Nadu CM Stalin offers \$1-million prize for decoding Indus Valley script

The Hindu Bureau

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced on Sunday a \$1-million prize for experts in organisations that succeeded in deciphering the scripts of the Indus Valley Civilisation for everyone to understand.

"We are not able to decipher the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation that flourished once. It remains a mystery even after 100 years. Archaeologists, Tamil computer software experts and computer experts have been making efforts to decipher the script. To encourage the research, the government will offer one million dollars," Mr. Stalin said at an event in Chennai to mark the centenary of the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilisation.



Indus signs and graffiti found in Mohenjodaro. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tion by Sir John Marshall.

The Chief Minister also announced a \$2-crore grant for setting up a chair in the name of noted archaeologist and epigraphist Iravatham Mahadevan to continue the research on the Indus Valley Civilisation jointly by the State Department of Archaeology and the Indus Research Centre at the Chennai-based Raja Muthiah Library.

South India and those of the Indus Valley Civilisation had parallels.

Turning point
Mr. Stalin, who laid the foundation stone for the statue of Sir John Marshall, said his discovery was a turning point in history and completely changed the understanding of the past. "Many used to argue that it was a figment of imagination that Aryan and Sanskrit originated in India. John Marshall's discovery completely changed the perception. His argument that Indus Valley Civilisation predated Aryan Civilisation and the language spoken in the Indus Valley could be Dravidian has been strengthened further," he said.

'PROOF OF CONTINUITIES'
» PAGE 5

Four Maoists, head constable killed in gunfight in Bastar

The Hindu Bureau

Four Maoists were killed in a gun battle with security forces that began on Saturday and continued till Sunday afternoon in the Ajuhmad forests of Bastar in Chhattisgarh, the police said.

A head constable, Sannu Karam, of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) was also killed.

The security forces have reportedly seized automatic weapons such as AK47.

Major hideout
Ajuhmad is a vast forested area spread across Bijapur, Dantewada and Karantakurum. The bodies were recovered.

They were in the uniform of the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army, an

The encounter began on Saturday and continued till Sunday afternoon in the Ajuhmad forests

armed wing of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist), he said.

Mr. Karam's last rites were performed in the Karli Police Lines of Dantewada later on Sunday.

Expressing condolences, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said: "His sacrifice will not go in vain."

"So far, 4 Naxalites have been killed in an encounter between security forces and Naxalites... The sad news of the martyrdom of DRG jawan, Head Constable Sannu Karam in the encounter has also been received," he posted on X.

"His sacrifice will not go in vain. The security forces are fighting very strongly against Naxalism and this fight will continue till its end", he added

Defence deals in last leg ahead of PM's Paris visit

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The deals, together worth over \$10 billion, will include the purchase of 26 Rafale-M fighter jets for the Indian Navy's aircraft carriers, and three additional Scorpene-class conventional submarines. The two deals are expected to be put before the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) for approval in the

next couple of weeks, sources said. "The expectation is that PM Modi will visit Paris to attend the AI Summit and will also have a bilateral component. So both sides are working to tie up the two deals which are in the final stages of conclusion," an informed source said. This was also independently confirmed by other sources.

The French President's office has already announced that Mr. Modi has been invited for the Artificial Intelligence Summit on February 10 and 11.

France says the meet will focus on actions to ensure that the global AI sector can drive beneficial outcomes. The summit will address five primary themes - Public interest AI, Future of Work, Innova-

Shopping list

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to be in Paris in February, India is looking to seal arms deals

WHAT THE COUNTRY WANTS?

- 26 Rafale-M fighter jets for the Navy's aircraft carriers
- Three more Scorpene-class conventional submarines
- The two deals are expected to be put before the Cabinet Committee on Security for approval soon

It is just matter of completing the formalities of the acquisition process and we expect that if not this month, next month, hopefully, this [Scorpene submarines] and Rafale-M deals should be signed

Navy chief Admiral **DINESH K. TRIPATHI** in December

India needs the naval version of the Rafale for INS Vikrant

tion and Culture, Trust in AI, and Global governance of AI.

In response to a question at his annual press conference last month, Na-

vy chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi said that both deals are in the final stage and could be completed next month. "It is just a matter of completing the

formalities of the acquisition process and we expect that if not this month, next month, hopefully, this [Scorpene submarine] and the Rafale-M deal should be signed," he had said.

On the Rafale-M deal, the Navy chief had said it was "one level short of taking it to the CCS (Cabinet Committee on Security)" for clearance, which will be followed by the signing of the contract. As it is a government-to-government deal, it is expected to be implemented quickly.

The deal for three Scorpene submarines is a repeat order to the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, which is building them in partnership with the Naval Group of France. Of the six submarines from the earlier contract, five have

been inducted.

The last one, *Vagsheer*, is set to be commissioned on January 15 in Mumbai, in the presence of Mr. Modi, along with two other frontline platforms.

On July 13, 2023, as Mr. Modi was enroute to Paris, the Defence Acquisition Council chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh accorded the Acceptance of Necessity for the procurement of 26 Rafale-M fighters and three additional Scorpene-class diesel-electric submarines.

Critical for Naval needs

The Rafale purchase includes 22 single seater Rafale-M jets and four twin-seater Rafale trainers, which are not carrier compatible. The 26 jets are meant to fill a critical gap

until the indigenous twin engine deck-based fighter, still under development, is ready to be inducted into service. The Navy currently operates two aircraft carriers: INS Vikramaditya procured from Russia, and the indigenously built INS Vikrant which was commissioned in September 2022.

The additional Scorpene-class submarines are a critical requirement for the Navy as it grapples with an ageing fleet and the huge delay in the procurement of six advanced submarines under Project-75I which is now awaiting a final decision between Germany and Spain. As reported by *The Hindu* earlier, the first of three Scorpene submarines is likely to be delivered in 2031.

Ahead of PM Narendra Modi's visit to Paris for the AI Summit, India and France are finalizing defence deals worth over \$10 billion

.प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के फरवरी में पेरिस दौरे से पहले भारत और फ्रांस के बीच \$10 बिलियन के दो प्रमुख रक्षा सौदों को अंतिम रूप दिया जा रहा है।



- **Rafale-M Fighter Jets:**




- Includes 26 Rafale-M fighter jets for the Indian Navy, complementing its aircraft carriers, INS Vikrant and INS Vikramaditya.

- भारतीय नौसेना के लिए 26 राफेल-एम फाइटर जेट्स का सौदा लगभग अंतिम चरण में है।

- **Scorpene Submarines:**


- Order for three additional Scorpene-class diesel-electric submarines, built in partnership with Naval Group of France.

- तीन अतिरिक्त स्कॉर्पीन क्लास डीजल-इलेक्ट्रिक पनडुब्बियों का ऑर्डर मद्रास डॉक शिपबिल्डर्स लिमिटेड को दिया जाएगा।





- **AI Summit and Bilateral Engagements:**

- Discussions at the AI Summit will focus on five themes: Public interest AI, Future of work, Innovation, Trust in AI, and Global governance of AI.
 - पेरिस में एआई समिट में पीएम मोदी और फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुएल मैक्रों पांच मुख्य विषयों पर चर्चा करेंगे: पब्लिक इंटरेस्ट एआई, भविष्य की कार्य संस्कृति, नवाचार और एआई का वैश्विक शासन।
- 

Importance of Defence Deals:

Naval Capability:

- These procurements are critical for replacing India's aging naval fleet.
- भारतीय नौसेना के लिए राफेल-एम विमान और स्कॉर्पीन पनडुब्बियां अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं क्योंकि यह पुराने बेड़े को बदलने में मदद करेंगी।

Strategic Advantage:

- Strengthens India's maritime security and strategic presence in the Indo-Pacific.
- यह सौदे भारत की समुद्री सुरक्षा और हिंद-प्रशांत क्षेत्र में रणनीतिक प्रभुत्व को मजबूत करेंगे।

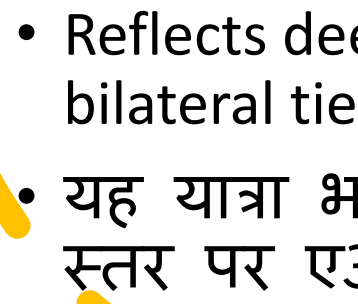




- **Historical Context:**

- Defence ties between India and France date back to the 1990s with purchases of Mirage 2000 jets and earlier Scorpene submarines.
- फ्रांस और भारत का रक्षा सहयोग 1990 के दशक से मजबूत रहा है, जिसमें मिराज 2000 विमानों और स्कॉर्पिन पनडुब्बियों की खरीद शामिल है।

- **Political Dimension:**

- Reflects deeper India-France collaboration in AI and defence, strengthening bilateral ties.
 - यह यात्रा भारत-फ्रांस साझेदारी को और गहरा करने का संकेत है, खासकर वैश्विक स्तर पर एआई और रक्षा प्रौद्योगिकी के क्षेत्र में।
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Tamil Nadu CM Stalin offers \$1-million prize for decoding Indus Valley script

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced on Sunday a \$1-million prize for experts or organisations that succeeded in deciphering the scripts of the Indus Valley Civilisation for everyone to understand.

“We are not able to decipher the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation that flourished once. It remains a mystery even after 100 years. Archaeologists, Tamil computer software experts and computer experts across the world have been making efforts to decipher the script. To encourage the research, the government will offer one million dollars,” Mr. Stalin said at an event in Chennai to mark the centenary of the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilisa-



Indus signs and graffiti from Mohenjodaro. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

tion by Sir John Marshall.

The Chief Minister also announced a ₹2-crore grant for setting up a chair in the name of noted archaeologist and epigraphist Iravatham Mahadevan to continue the research on the Indus Valley Civilisation jointly by the State Department of Archaeology and the Indus Research Centre at the Chennai-based Roja Muthiah Library.

He said the government would institute two awards to honour and encourage numismatists and epigraphists who had been working to highlight the ancientness of Tamil culture.

Pointing out that 60% of the graffiti marks found in Tamil Nadu had their parallels to the scripts found on the Indus seals, Mr. Stalin said archaeologists had established that more than 90% of the graffiti marks of

South India and those of the Indus Valley Civilisation had parallels.

Turning point

Mr. Stalin, who laid the foundation stone for the statue of Sir John Marshall, said his discovery was a turning point in history and completely changed the understanding of the past. “Many used to argue that it was a figment of imagination that Aryan and Sanskrit originated in India. John Marshall’s discovery completely changed the perception. His argument that Indus Valley Civilisation predated Aryan Civilisation and the language spoken in the Indus Valley could be Dravidian has been strengthened further,” he said.

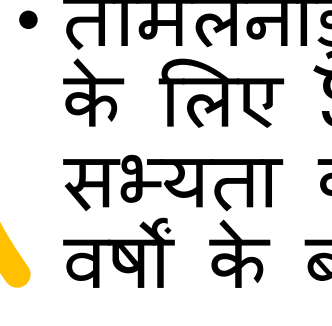
‘PROOF OF CONTINUITIES’

» PAGE 5



- **Overview:**

- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has announced a \$1-million prize for individuals or organizations that successfully decipher the script of the Indus Valley Civilization, which remains a mystery even after 100 years.

- 
- तमिलनाडु के मुख्यमंत्री एम.के. स्टालिन ने उन व्यक्तियों या संगठनों के लिए \$1 मिलियन का पुरस्कार घोषित किया है जो सिंधु घाटी सभ्यता की लिपि को सफलतापूर्वक पढ़ने में सक्षम होंगे, जो 100 वर्षों के बाद भी रहस्य बनी हुई है।

1. Research Grant:

1. A ₹2-crore grant will be provided for a dedicated research chair named after noted archaeologist and epigraphist Iravatham Mahadevan to promote further studies on the Indus Valley Civilization.
2. सिंधु घाटी सभ्यता पर शोध को बढ़ावा देने के लिए प्रसिद्ध पुरातत्वविद और शिलालेख विशेषज्ञ इरावथम महादेवन के नाम पर ₹2 करोड़ का अनुदान प्रदान किया जाएगा।

2. Centenary Celebration:

1. The announcement was made at the centenary event marking the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization by Sir John Marshall.
2. यह घोषणा सर जॉन मार्शल द्वारा सिंधु घाटी सभ्यता की खोज की शताब्दी समारोह के दौरान की गई।

- **Turning Point in History:**
- Stalin emphasized that John Marshall's discovery transformed the understanding of history, debunking the notion that Aryan and Sanskrit originated in India.
- स्टालिन ने कहा कि जॉन मार्शल की खोज ने इतिहास की समझ को बदल दिया, यह सिद्ध करते हुए कि आर्य और संस्कृत की उत्पत्ति भारत में नहीं हुई थी।



Linguistic Insights:

Parallels with Tamil Culture:

- About 60% of graffiti marks from the Indus Valley show parallels with scripts found in Tamil Nadu, strengthening the argument that the Indus language could have been Dravidian.
- सिंधु घाटी से प्राप्त 60% ग्रैफिटी चिह्न तमिलनाडु की लिपियों के समान हैं, जो यह सुझाव देते हैं कि सिंधु भाषा द्रविड़ हो सकती है।

Continuity of Culture:

- Archaeologists have established that more than 90% of graffiti found in Tamil Nadu are connected to the Indus Valley Civilization.
- पुरातत्वविदों ने यह स्थापित किया है कि तमिलनाडु में पाए गए 90% से अधिक ग्रैफिटी चिह्न सिंधु घाटी सभ्यता से जुड़े हुए हैं।

Historical, Political, and Cultural Points:

Historical Context:

- The Indus Valley Civilization, discovered in 1924, is one of the oldest urban cultures, but its script remains undeciphered.
- 1924 में खोजी गई सिंधु घाटी सभ्यता सबसे पुरानी शहरी संस्कृतियों में से एक है, लेकिन इसकी लिपि अभी भी अनसुलझी है।

Political Dimension:

- The initiative reflects Tamil Nadu's efforts to link its cultural heritage with the legacy of the Indus Valley Civilization.
- यह पहल तमिलनाडु की सांस्कृतिक विरासत को सिंधु घाटी सभ्यता की विरासत से जोड़ने का प्रयास है।

1. Cultural Significance:

1. The recognition of linguistic and cultural continuity strengthens Tamil Nadu's claim of being deeply rooted in ancient Dravidian traditions.
2. भाषाई और सांस्कृतिक निरंतरता की पहचान तमिलनाडु के प्राचीन द्रविड़ परंपराओं में गहरी जड़ों को और मजबूत करती है।



Quarantine animals with symptoms of avian flu, Centre tells States after deaths of tiger, leopard

A.M. Jigeesh

NEW DELHI

With Maharashtra reporting India's first case of avian influenza among animals, the Union Animal Husbandry Ministry sent a circular to all States on Sunday, urging them to quarantine infected or symptomatic tigers and other feline species to prevent transmission to humans and other animals.

Three tigers and one leopard died of the H5N1 virus, better known as bird flu, at an animal rescue centre in Nagpur in the last week of December.

Avian influenza is crossing the species barrier, Union Animal Husbandry Commissioner Abhijit Mitra told *The Hindu* on Sunday. Citing cases in the U.S.



Infection alert: Avian influenza has been found in cattle and goats, as well as in wild species, particularly tigers. A.M. FARUQUI

and Vietnam, he said that avian influenza has been found in cattle and goats, as well as in wild species, particularly tigers.

"In Maharashtra, the case was reported from a rescue centre and after post-mortem, the samples were sent to the Indian Council of Agricultural Re-

search's National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases at Bhopal. There, the samples tested positive for avian influenza," Dr. Mitra said, noting that this is the first time that bird flu has been reported among animals in India. "They are precious animals. We have isolated them and are

treating them. The National Joint Outbreak Response Team has reached there and is implementing the steps to be taken in such a scenario," he said, adding that the Ministry will issue detailed guidelines on the matter within a week.

The Ministry is also examining the reasons for the infection.


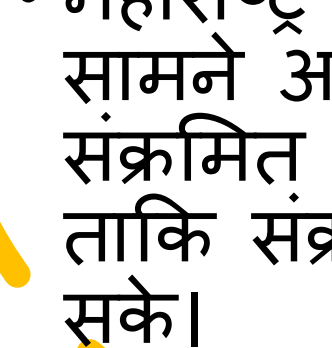
"The animals are in a rescue centre. Maybe the chicken served to them could be the reason for the disease. We are examining it and have alerted the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change too," Dr. Mitra said, adding that there is no need to panic at present. "The human beings who came in touch with the animals during the treatment and the post-mortem are also

being screened," he said.

Biosecurity protocols

In its circular, the Ministry directed that any affected establishment will have to be temporarily shut to the public and initiate enhanced biosecurity protocols. It also directed States to strengthen biosecurity and carry out thorough disinfection in the entire area where deaths have been reported.

It added that the deaths of the tigers and a leopard that have tested positive for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HAI) raise significant concerns about the rapid spread of the virus. "The situation demands urgent attention to mitigate risks to both animal and human health" the circular said.

- 
- The Union Animal Husbandry Ministry issued a circular to all states following India's first reported case of avian influenza among animals in Maharashtra, advising strict quarantine of infected or symptomatic animals to prevent the spread of infection to humans and other species.
 - महाराष्ट्र में जानवरों में पहली बार एवियन इन्फ्लूएंजा का मामला सामने आने के बाद, केंद्रीय पशुपालन मंत्रालय ने सभी राज्यों को संक्रमित या लक्षणयुक्त जानवरों को क्वारंटीन करने की सलाह दी है ताकि संक्रमण को मनुष्यों और अन्य प्रजातियों में फैलने से रोका जा सके।
- 






- **Infected Animals:**

- Three tigers and one leopard died of the H5N1 virus (bird flu) at a rescue center in Nagpur.

- नागपुर के एक बचाव केंद्र में तीन बाघों और एक तेंदुए की एच5एन1 वायरस (बर्ड फ्लू) से मौत हो गई।

- **Avian Influenza Findings:**

- The virus has been found in cattle, goats, and wild species like tigers, crossing the species barrier.

- वायरस मवेशियों, बकरियों और बाघ जैसे जंगली प्रजातियों में पाया गया है, जो प्रजातियों की बाधा को पार कर रहा है।
- 
- 
- 

1. Post-Mortem and Research:

1. Samples from the deceased animals tested positive at the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases, Bhopal.
2. मृत जानवरों के नमूनों का भोपाल के राष्ट्रीय उच्च सुरक्षा पशु रोग संस्थान में परीक्षण किया गया, जो सकारात्मक पाया गया।



Ministry Directives:

Quarantine Measures:

- States must quarantine affected animals and strengthen biosecurity protocols in affected areas.
- राज्यों को प्रभावित जानवरों को अलग करने और प्रभावित क्षेत्रों में जैव सुरक्षा प्रोटोकॉल को मजबूत करने का निर्देश दिया गया है।

Biosecurity and Disinfection:

- Any affected establishment must temporarily close to the public and undergo thorough disinfection.
- किसी भी प्रभावित स्थान को जनता के लिए अस्थायी रूप से बंद करना होगा और पूरी तरह से कीटाणुरहित किया जाएगा।

Human Interaction:

- Individuals in contact with infected animals are also being screened to prevent further spread.
- संक्रमित जानवरों के संपर्क में आने वाले लोगों की जांच भी की जा रही है।

- **Historical, Environmental, and Health Perspectives:**

- 1. Historical Context:**

1. Avian influenza has primarily been a concern for poultry, but cross-species transmission to wild animals like tigers is a rare phenomenon.
2. एवियन इन्फ्लूएंजा मुख्य रूप से मृगियों में पाया जाता है, लेकिन बाघ जैसे जंगली जानवरों में इसका स्थानांतरण एक दुर्लभ घटना है।

- 2. Environmental Impact:**

1. Wildlife in rescue centers faces heightened risks, emphasizing the need for stringent biosecurity measures.
2. बचाव केंद्रों में वन्यजीवों को अधिक जोखिम का सामना करना पड़ता है, जिससे सख्त जैव सुरक्षा उपायों की आवश्यकता होती है।

Meet the highest-paid man in the world – He is a co-founder and earns Rs 48 crore per day



Quantumscape CEO Highest paid Employee: Jagdeep Singh's remarkable success is evident not only in the technological strides of QuantumScape but also in his extraordinary earnings. With an annual income of Rs 17,500 crore, he is recognized as the highest-paid employee globally.

Written by [FE Lifestyle](#)
January 5, 2025 20:53 IST





Manastu Space's Green Propulsion Success



- 
- Manastu Space, a space tech start-up founded by IIT Bombay alumni, made headlines by successfully test-firing its Green Propulsion System, VYOM 2U, onboard the PSLV-C60.
 - The system represents a non-toxic, environmentally friendly alternative to traditional chemical propulsion methods. This innovation aims to minimise the environmental impact of space missions while improving safety for human health.
- 



India Updates GDP Base Year to 2022-23

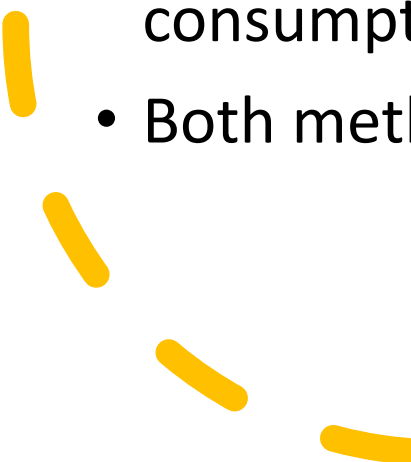
The Government of India has recently decided to update the base year for calculating Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 2011-12 to 2022-23. This change aims to provide a more accurate representation of the current economic landscape and enhance policy formulation.

The revision reflects shifts in economic activity, consumption patterns, and industry developments over the past decade.

- 
- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has established a 26-member Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics.
 - This committee, chaired by Biswanath Goldar, will determine the new base year for GDP calculations
- 





- **GDP Calculation Methods in India**

- India calculates GDP using two primary methods – the factor cost method and the expenditure method.
 - The factor cost method evaluates the performance of eight key industries,
 - while the expenditure method assesses the economy based on household consumption, investments, and government spending.
 - Both methods yield figures that are closely aligned but may differ slightly.
- 






Lokpal Day to be
Observed on
January 16



- 
- The Lokpal of India has designated January 16 as “Lokpal Day”. This decision was made during a meeting on March 14, 2024.
- 



- **History and Genesis:**

- In the 1960s, the Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) recommended the creation of Lokpal and Lokayukta.
 - The concept of an ombudsman in India was first proposed by Ashok Kumar Sen, and the term “Lokpal” was coined by Dr. L. M. Singhvi in 1963.
 - Lokpal Bill was passed in 1968 but lapsed; it was repeatedly introduced and finally became law in 2013 after the Anna Hazare movement.
- 

- 
- **Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013:**
 - **Selection Committee:** Includes the Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Leader of Opposition, Chief Justice of India, and an eminent jurist.
 - **Jurisdiction:** Includes Prime Minister, Ministers, MPs, and government employees.
 - **Composition:** Lokpal has a chairperson and up to 8 members (half judicial), with a focus on diversity (SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, and women).
- 

- 
- The Lokpal of India consists of a Chairperson and six members. Justice A. M. Khanwilkar is the second Chairperson, having taken office on March 10, 2024.
- 

A large satellite dish antenna is positioned on a dark, flat landscape under a starry night sky. The dish is angled upwards, and the Milky Way galaxy is visible in the background. The text "ISRO to Launch US Communications Satellite Bluebird" is overlaid in white on the image.

ISRO to Launch US Communications Satellite Bluebird



The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to make history by launching an American communications satellite.

This is the first time an American company is using an Indian rocket for such a large and advanced satellite.

The mission is expected to occur in February or March 2025.



AST SpaceMobile, a Texas-based company, is expected to be the manufacturer of the satellite.



The company has developed technology that allows users to make voice calls using standard smartphones.



Unlike other satellite communication providers, AST SpaceMobile does not require users to purchase special handsets or terminals, making it more accessible to the general public.



**Live in Relationship
among Tribe**

- The **Konda Reddi tribe** in Andhra Pradesh has embraced live-in relationships as a cultural shift to avoid the financial burdens of traditional weddings.

-



- **Live-In Relationships Among the Tribe:**

- **New Culture of Live-In:**

- Tribal couples opt for live-in arrangements with parental and community approval, bypassing traditional wedding rituals.
- Elders uphold the sanctity of these relationships, treating them on par with formal marriages.





- **Reasons for Transition:**

- High costs of traditional weddings involving multi-day feasts.
- Practicality and ease in forming partnerships without elaborate ceremonies.
- Influence of modernity and exposure to urban lifestyles.

- **Modernization and Westernization:**

- Reflects the tribe's adaptation to contemporary norms while maintaining cultural essence.
- Highlights the balancing act between preserving heritage and embracing practicality.





LEADS 2024 Report



- Union Minister for Commerce and Industry launched the Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024 report to evaluate logistics efficiency across Indian states and union territories.



- 
- **About LEADS:**
 - **Full Form:** Logistics Ease Across Different States.
 - **Launched In:** 2018.
 - **Ministry:** Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- 

Aim:

- Assess logistics infrastructure and services across states/UTs.
- Provide actionable insights for logistics reforms.
- Foster competitive federalism to enhance logistics efficiency.

Parameters:



- Logistics Infrastructure.
- Logistics Services.
- Operating and Regulatory Environment

- LEADS Report 2024 Performance Highlights:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Achievers</u>	<u>Fast Movers</u>	<u>Aspirers</u>
Coastal States	Gujarat,Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu	Andhra Pradesh,Goa	Kerala,West Bengal
Landlocked States	Haryana,Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand	Bihar,Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan	Chhattisgarh,Jharkhand
North-Eastern	Assam,Arunachal Pradesh	Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura	Manipur
Union Territories	Chandigarh,Delhi	Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Puducherry	Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh

Mission ShakthiSAT





- 
- ISRO has brought together about 12,000 talented girls from 108 countries for an all-girls flight to the lunar orbit, Mission ShakthiSAT.
 - **About Mission ShakthiSAT:**
 - **What it is:** An **all-girls lunar mission** involving the design, build, and launch of a satellite to the lunar orbit, showcasing global talent in space exploration.
 - **Expected Launch:** Scheduled for **September 2026**, to be launched by ISRO's **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)**.
- 

Organizations Involved:

- **ISRO:** Leading the mission.
- **Space Kidz India (SKI):** Coordinating student participation and payload development.
- **IN-SPACe:** Facilitating private sector involvement in the project.



Objective:

- Promote **gender inclusivity** in STEM by empowering young women.
- Inspire global collaboration in space science and technology.
- Conduct **scientific experiments** in lunar orbit using student-developed payloads.

- 
- **Global Representation:** Participation from 12,000 girls across **108 countries**.
 - **Age Criteria:**
 - **African/Latin American countries:** Girls aged 14–18 years.
 - **Other regions:** Girls aged 14–16 years.
 - **Skill Development:** Top **108 girls** will be trained in Chennai to build payloads for the satellite.
- 



Chhattisgarh First State to Link
Forest Ecosystem with Green
GDP




- 
- Chhattisgarh has become the **first state in India** to introduce a pioneering initiative linking the ecosystem services of forests to the **Green Gross Domestic Product (Green GDP)**.
 - **What is Green GDP?**
 - **Green GDP is an economic indicator** that aims to measure the true economic performance of a country while considering the environmental impact of economic activity.
- 

- **Green GDP:**

- Subtracts the environmental costs of economic activity from traditional GDP.
- Includes the value of environmental benefits, such as those provided by forests (clean air, water purification, biodiversity).



-



- 
- **Global Initiatives on Green DP Accounting**
 - **United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA):** The SEEA provides a framework for integrating environmental data into national accounts.
 1. Tracks natural resources, environmental degradation, and ecosystem services.
 - **Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES):** A global partnership led by the World Bank, WAVES supports countries in incorporating natural capital into national accounts.
 1. Focuses on forests, water, and ecosystems.
- 
- 

A photograph of a nuclear power plant at night. The scene is dominated by several large, cylindrical cooling towers and tall smokestacks. Thick plumes of white steam or smoke are rising from the towers and stacks, filling the dark sky. The plant's buildings and piping are illuminated by artificial lights, with some red-painted pipes visible in the foreground. The overall atmosphere is industrial and somewhat somber due to the dark background.

Private Sector Participation in Nuclear Power

- 
- Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) has invited requests for proposals (RFPs) from private players to set up **Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs)**.
 - **About**
 - It is the **first formal move** by the Union government to **decentralise the country's nuclear power sector**.
- 

- Proposals are made for setting up **220 MW Bharat Small Reactors (BSR)** for captive use.
 - BSRs are Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR) with an impeccable **safety and excellent performance record**.
 - BSRs can provide a **sustainable solution for decarbonization of hard to abate industries**.



- This announcement is aimed at India's ambitious **pursuit of the decarbonisation of energy generation** and achieving 500 Gigawatts of non-fossil fuel-based energy generation in India by 2030.







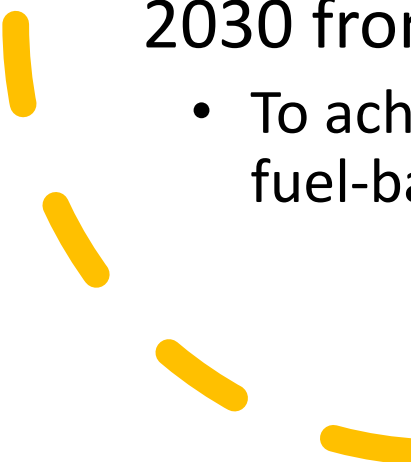
- **Nuclear Energy**

- Nuclear power is **not renewable energy** but it is a **zero-emission clean energy** source.

- It generates power **through fission**, which is the process of **splitting uranium atoms to produce energy**.

- The heat released by fission is used to create steam that spins a turbine to generate electricity without the harmful by-products emitted by fossil fuels.



- 
- **Need for Private Players in Nuclear Sector**
 - **Nuclear Capacity:** India's plans to increase its nuclear power capacity from the current 8,180 MW to 22,480 MW by 2031-32 and eventually 100 GW by 2047.
 - **India's Targets:** To reduce the emission intensity of its GDP by 44% by 2030 from the 2005 level.
 - To achieve 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.
- 



India's 1st 'Coastline-Waders Bird Census'

- 
- Gujarat is set to conduct the country's first-ever census of **coastal and wader birds** at the **Marine National Park** and Sanctuary in Jamnagar.
 - **About**
 - The census will be jointly organised by the **state forest department** and the **Bird Conservation Society of Gujarat**.





-

- **Waders Bird:**

- They are also known as **shorebirds or sandpipers**, are a group of birds typically found in coastal habitats or wetlands.
- They are characterized by **long legs, slender bodies, and often long bills**, which they use to forage for food like insects and worms.



- 
- **Marine National Park:** The Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Gujarat is **India's first designated marine national park.**
 - Spanning the districts of Devbhoomi Dwarka, Jamnagar, and Morbi, it covers approximately 170 km of coastline and 42 islands.
 - This protected area in the **Gulf of Kutch** was established to conserve marine biodiversity and mangrove ecosystems.
- 



- **Bird Species:**

- Jamnagar district hosts over **300 species of local and migratory birds**, including more than 50 species of wader birds.
- Among these are rare species like the **‘Shankhlo’ (Crab Plover)** and **‘Moto Kichadiyo’ (Great Knot)**, which are seldom found elsewhere in the country.

National Sports Awards 2024



- Recently, the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports announced the National Sports Awards 2024.
- Names of the awardee were announced for the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna, Arjuna, Dronacharya, Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) trophy.



Awards	Recipients
Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award	Gukesh D (Chess), Harmanpreet Singh (Hockey), Praveen Kumar (Para-Athletics) and Manu Bhaker (Shooting).
Arjuna Awards for outstanding performance	Jyothi Yarraji (Athletics), Annu Rani (Athletics), Nitu (Boxing), Rakesh Kumar (Para-Archery), Navdeep (Para-Athletics) etc.
Arjuna Awards (Lifetime) for outstanding performance	Sucha Singh (Athletics), Murlikant Rajaram Petkar (Para-Swimming)
Dronacharya Award	Subhash Rana (Para-Shooting), S Muralidharan (Badminton) etc.
Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar	Physical Education Foundation of India
MAKA Trophy	Chandigarh University (Overall winner)

Q.Consider the following pairs with regard to sports awards: (2023)

ward Name	Purpose
Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award	For the most spectacular and outstanding performance by a sportsperson over the last four years.
Arjuna Award	For lifetime achievement by a sportsperson.
Dronacharya Award	To honour eminent coaches who have successfully trained sportspersons or teams.
Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar	To recognize the contribution made by sports persons even after their retirement.

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) All four

Q. Consider the following statements in respect of the Laureus World Sports Award which was instituted in the year 2000:

1. American golfer Tiger Woods was the first winner of this award.
2. The award was received mostly by 'Formula One' players so far.
3. Roger Federer received this award the maximum number of times compared to others.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Inter-State Translocation of Tigers



Recently, Madhya Pradesh has directed the translocation of 15 tigers from Madhya Pradesh to Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha for conservation purposes.

The tigers will be translocated from the Bandhavgarh, Pench, and Kanha tiger reserves in Madhya Pradesh.

A total of 12 tigresses and 3 tigers will be moved, following approval from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

The distribution plan includes six tigresses and two tigers for Chhattisgarh, four tigresses for Rajasthan, and one tiger and two tigresses for Odisha.

Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tigers in India, with 785 tigers according to the NTCA 2022 report.

The state has Nine tiger reserves, including the newly notified Madhav Tiger Reserve in Shivpuri District.

TIGER

Royal Bengal Tiger (*Panthera Tigris*) is the National animal of India.

Subspecies of Tiger

- * The continental (*Panthera tigris tigris*)
- * The Sunda (*Panthera tigris sondaica*)

Habitat

Tropical rainforests, evergreen forests, temperate forests, mangrove swamps, grasslands, and savannas



Countries Where Tiger Population Is Found

- Found only in 13 Tiger Range countries- India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Russia, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam
- As per the latest report by IUCN, tiger has gone extinct in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam

Protection Status

- IUCN Red List: Endangered
- CITES: Appendix I
- WPA 1972: Schedule I

Conservation Efforts

- International Big Cats Alliance (IBCA):** For conservation of seven big cats namely Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma (launched by India)
- Tx2 campaign:** Launched by WWF; stands for 'Tiger times 2' signaling the goal to double the tiger population by 2022
- National Tiger Conservation authority (NTCA):** Constituted under the WPA, 1972
- Project Tiger:** Launched in 1973
- Tiger Census:** Every 4 years

Threats

- Habitat loss
- Poaching and illegal trade
- Human-Wildlife conflict

Tigers In India

- India has the **largest** population
 - As of 2022, India has 3167 tigers
 - Largest population has been found in Central Indian Highlands & Eastern Ghats Landscape
- Tiger Reserves:** India now has 53 tiger reserves
 - Ranipur in UP** is the latest
 - Nagarjun Sagar (Andhra Pradesh)** is the **largest** while Orang (Assam) is the **smallest** (Core area)



AICTE's 2025 'Year of AI'

Recently, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has designated 2025 as the "Year of Artificial Intelligence" to position India as a global leader in AI.

AICTE aims to promote AI in education through updated curricula, workshops for faculty, and collaborations with AI-driven companies for real-world exposure.

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

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

- What is the purpose of the "Green Propulsion System" developed by Manastu Space?
मणस्तु स्पेस द्वारा विकसित "ग्रीन प्रोपल्शन सिस्टम" का उद्देश्य क्या है?
- **A. To reduce environmental impact of space missions / अंतरिक्ष मिशनों के पर्यावरणीय प्रभाव को कम करना**
- **B. To increase rocket fuel efficiency / रॉकेट ईंधन की दक्षता बढ़ाना**
- **C. To minimize human health risks / मानव स्वास्थ्य जोखिमों को कम करना**
- **D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी**

- What is the primary function of Bharat Small Reactors (BSRs)?
भारत के स्मॉल रिएक्टर्स (BSRs) का मुख्य कार्य क्या है?
- A. Enhance nuclear power capacity for decarbonization /
डीकार्बोनाइजेशन के लिए परमाणु ऊर्जा क्षमता को बढ़ाना
- B. Produce low-cost energy for households / घरों के लिए कम लागत
वाली ऊर्जा का उत्पादन करना
- C. Develop alternative fuel sources / वैकल्पिक ईंधन स्रोतों का विकास
करना
- D. Support agricultural innovations / कृषि नवाचारों का समर्थन करना

- Which state conducted India's first coastline and wader bird census?
भारत की पहली तटरेखा और वॉडर बर्ड जनगणना किस राज्य ने आयोजित की?
- **A. Gujarat / गुजरात**
- B. Kerala / केरल**
- C. Tamil Nadu / तमिलनाडु**
- D. Maharashtra / महाराष्ट्र**

- What type of bird is the "Shankhlo" (Crab Plover), found in Jamnagar's Marine National Park?
जामनगर के समुद्री राष्ट्रीय उद्यान में पाए जाने वाले "शंखलो" (क्रैब प्लोवर) पक्षी का प्रकार क्या है?
- **A. Predator / शिकारी**
- **B. Wader bird / वांडर पक्षी**
- **C. Migratory bird / प्रवासी पक्षी**
- **D. Endangered bird / संकटग्रस्त पक्षी**

- What major theme will be discussed at the AI Summit in Paris?
पेरिस में एआई शिखर सम्मेलन में कौन सा प्रमुख विषय चर्चा में होगा?
- **A. Global governance of AI / एआई का वैश्विक शासन**
- **B. AI in education / शिक्षा में एआई**
- **C. AI for healthcare / स्वास्थ्य देखभाल के लिए एआई**
- **D. Renewable energy powered by AI / एआई द्वारा संचालित नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा**

- Which country developed the Scorpene-class submarines in partnership with India?

किस देश ने भारत के साथ साझेदारी में स्कॉर्पीन-क्लास पनडुब्बियां विकसित कीं?

- **A. Russia / रूस**
- B. France / फ्रांस**
- C. USA / अमेरिका**
- D. Germany / जर्मनी**

- What is the main challenge associated with the development of the Great Knot bird habitat in Gujarat?
गुजरात में ग्रेट नॉट पक्षी के आवास के विकास से संबंधित मुख्य चुनौती क्या है?
- A. Habitat loss due to tourism / पर्यटन के कारण आवास की हानि
- B. Overhunting / अत्यधिक शिकार
- C. Pollution in coastal waters / तटीय जल में प्रदूषण
- D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी

- What is the expected launch year for ISRO's Mission ShaktiSAT?
इसरो के मिशन शक्तिSAT के लॉन्च का अपेक्षित वर्ष क्या है?
- **A. 2025**
- **B. 2026**
- **C. 2027**
- **D. 2028**

- What is Green GDP?
ग्रीन जीडीपी क्या है?
- A. GDP calculation without environmental costs / पर्यावरणीय लागतों के बिना जीडीपी गणना
- B. GDP that includes environmental benefits and costs / जिसमें पर्यावरणीय लाभ और लागत शामिल हैं
- C. GDP based on renewable energy outputs / नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा उत्पादन पर आधारित जीडीपी
- D. None of the above / उपरोक्त में से कोई नहीं

- What unique feature is highlighted in the Marine National Park of Gujarat?
गजरात के समुद्री राष्ट्रीय उद्यान में कौन सी अनोखी विशेषता उजागर की गई है?
- **A. Hosts over 50 species of wader birds / 50 से अधिक वॉडर पक्षियों की प्रजातियों की मेजबानी करता है**
- **B. India's first designated marine park / भारत का पहला नामित समुद्री पार्क**
- **C. Conservation of mangroves and biodiversity / मैंग्रोव और जैव विविधता का संरक्षण**
- **D. All of the above / उपरोक्त सभी**

Word of the day

Addlepated:

stupid and confused

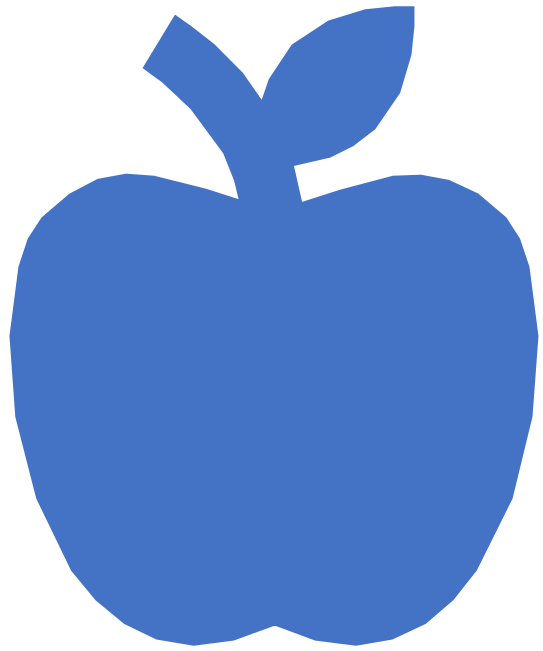
Synonyms: addlebrained, muddleheaded

Usage: *The blow made me addlepated and weakened my legs.*

Pronunciation: [newsth.live/
addlepatedpro](http://newsth.live/addlepatedpro)



Fun Fact



Myth : Isaac Newton discovered gravity when an apple hit his head.

- **Truth:** Newton's inspiration likely came from observing falling apples, but there's no evidence one hit him on the head.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

By Bhunesh Sir

- ✓ UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE 2 YEARS (2023 + 2024) CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE NOTES (PDF)
- ✓ 360° DEGREE EXAMS COVERED

~~₹999/-~~ ₹499/-

NEW
2025 BATCH

Happy New Year



CLASS24

COMPLETE GK/GS COURSE

By Bhunesh Sir

- ✓ STATIC GK
- ✓ HISTORY
- ✓ POLITY
- ✓ GEOGRAPHY
- ✓ ECONOMICS
- ✓ SCIENCE

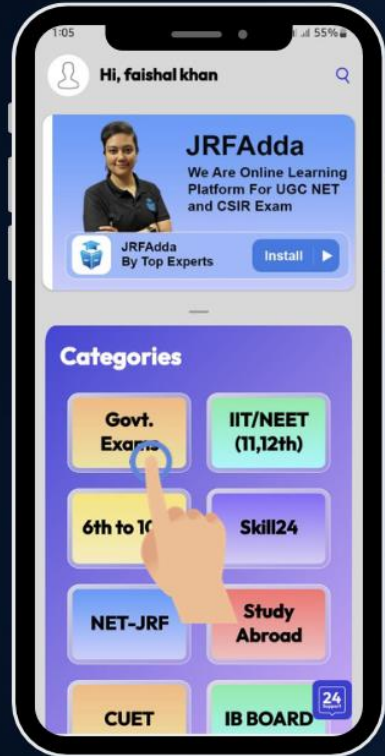
~~₹999/-~~ ₹499/-

USE CODE - B50

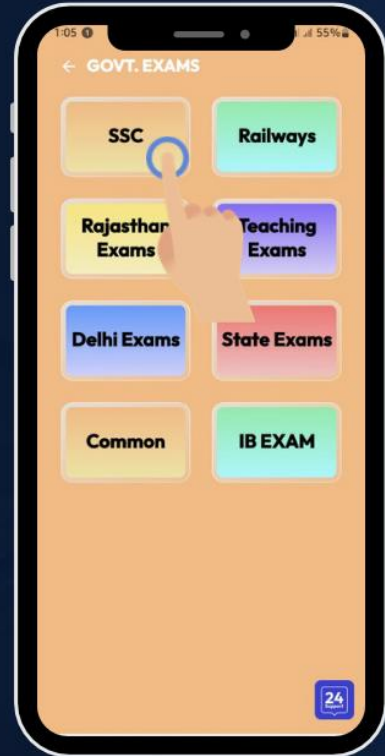
CALL FOR SUPPORT: +91-7414862047

USE CODE - B50

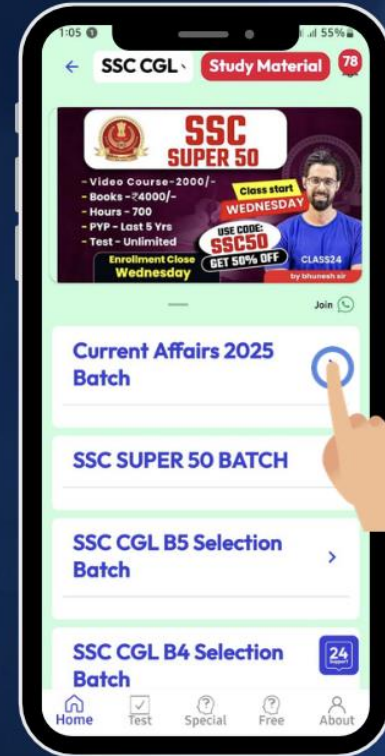
Step 1



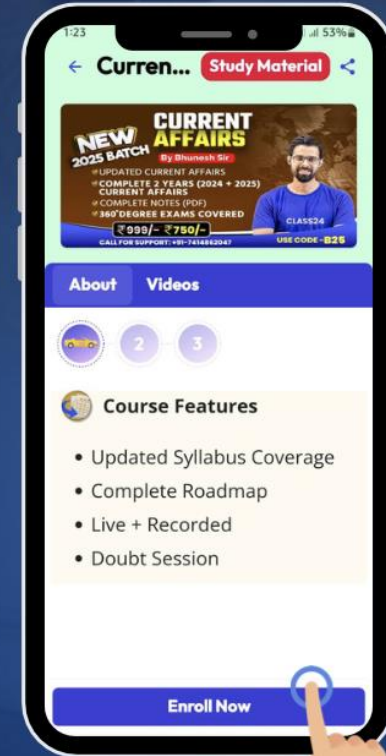
Step 2




Step 3



Step 4



A group of people in a meeting, with several hands raised in the air, suggesting an interactive session or a presentation. The image is overlaid with a dark gradient and decorative elements, including a solid orange rectangle and a trail of red dots in the upper left corner. The text "Thank you guys." is written in white on the left side, with a horizontal white line underneath it.

Thank you
guys.
