

Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता



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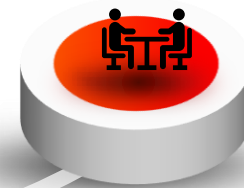
3
PIB, PRS & Other newspaper



1
The Indian Express



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Jansatta



1
Financial Express

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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 is overlaid in the center of the image.

Top 10 MCQ from the session for
every exam

- What does the Mercalli Scale measure?
मर्काली स्केल क्या मापता है?
- **A. Magnitude of earthquakes / भूकंप की तीव्रता**
- **B. Intensity of earthquakes based on after-effects / आफ्टर-इफेक्ट्स के आधार पर भूकंप की तीव्रता**
- **C. Destruction caused by tsunamis / सुनामी द्वारा हुई तबाही**
- **D. Seismic activity under oceans / महासागरों के नीचे भूकंपीय गतिविधि**

- What technological capability do Sonobuoys provide?
सोनोबाँय कौन सी तकनीकी क्षमता प्रदान करते हैं?
- **A. Detection of submarines through acoustic signals / ध्वनिक संकेतों के माध्यम से पनडुब्बियों का पता लगाना**
- B. Monitoring air pollution / वायु प्रदूषण की निगरानी**
- C. Enhancing satellite communication / सैटेलाइट संचार को बढ़ाना**
- D. Data collection for weather predictions / मौसम पूर्वानुमान के लिए डेटा संग्रह**

- Who was recently appointed as the Chairman of ISRO and Secretary of the Department of Space?
हाल ही में इसरो के अध्यक्ष और अंतरिक्ष विभाग के सचिव के रूप में किसे नियुक्त किया गया?
- **A. S. Somanath / एस. सोमनाथ**
B. V. Narayanan / वी. नारायणन
C. Rakesh Sharma / राकेश शर्मा
D. K. Sivan / के. सिवन

- What role did V. Narayanan play in the Chandrayaan missions?
चंद्रयान मिशनों में वी. नारायणन की क्या भूमिका थी?
- **A. Designed propulsion systems for Chandrayaan-2 and Chandrayaan-3 / चंद्रयान-2 और चंद्रयान-3 के लिए प्रणोदन प्रणाली डिजाइन की**
- **B. Head of the spacecraft design team / अंतरिक्ष यान डिजाइन टीम के प्रमुख**
- **C. Chief scientist for navigation systems / नेविगेशन सिस्टम के मुख्य वैज्ञानिक**
- **D. Coordinated international collaborations / अंतरराष्ट्रीय सहयोग का समन्वय किया**

- What is the purpose of the Maiya Samman Yojana in Jharkhand?
झारखंड में माईया सम्मान योजना का उद्देश्य क्या है?
- **A. Provide financial assistance to women aged 18-50 / 18-50 आयु वर्ग की महिलाओं को वित्तीय सहायता प्रदान करना**
- **B. Promote girl child education / बालिका शिक्षा को बढ़ावा देना**
- **C. Provide healthcare benefits to rural women / ग्रामीण महिलाओं को स्वास्थ्य लाभ प्रदान करना**
- **D. Empower self-help groups / स्वयं सहायता समूहों को सशक्त बनाना**

- Which banks recently exited the Net-Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA)?
हाल ही में कौन से बैंक नेट-जीरो बैंकिंग एलायंस (NZBA) से बाहर हुए?
- **A. Citigroup and Bank of America / सिटीग्रुप और बैंक ऑफ अमेरिका**
- **B. Wells Fargo and HSBC / वेल्स फारगो और एचएसबीसी**
- **C. Deutsche Bank and Standard Chartered / डॉयचे बैंक और स्टैंडर्ड चार्टर्ड**
- **D. Barclays and JP Morgan / बार्कलेज और जेपी मॉर्गन**

- What is the major limitation of legalizing MSP?
एमएसपी को कानूनी रूप देने की मुख्य सीमा क्या है?
- **A. High fiscal cost / उच्च वित्तीय लागत**
- **B. Lack of public support / सार्वजनिक समर्थन की कमी**
- **C. Opposition from international trade bodies / अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार निकायों का विरोध**
- **D. None of the above / उपरोक्त में से कोई नहीं**

- What are the major events planned by the Athletics Federation of India in 2029?

2029 में एथलेटिक्स फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडिया द्वारा योजनाबद्ध मुख्य कार्यक्रम क्या हैं?

- **A. World Junior Championships, World Relays, and World Half Marathon / वर्ल्ड जूनियर चैंपियनशिप, वर्ल्ड रिले और वर्ल्ड हाफ मैराथन**

B. Asian Games and Olympics / एशियाई खेल और ओलंपिक

C. Continental Cup and Global Track Meet / कॉन्टिनेंटल कप और ग्लोबल ट्रैक मीट

D. None of the above / उपरोक्त में से कोई नहीं

- What major myth about the Mughal Empire was recently debunked?
मगल साम्राज्य से संबंधित कौन सा प्रमुख मिथक हाल ही में खारिज किया गया?
- **A. Mughals ruled all of India / मुगलों ने पूरे भारत पर शासन किया**
- **B. Mughals introduced the caste system / मुगलों ने जाति व्यवस्था शुरू की**
- **C. Mughals had no naval presence / मुगलों की नौसेना नहीं थी**
- **D. Mughals abolished local governance / मुगलों ने स्थानीय शासन को समाप्त कर दिया**

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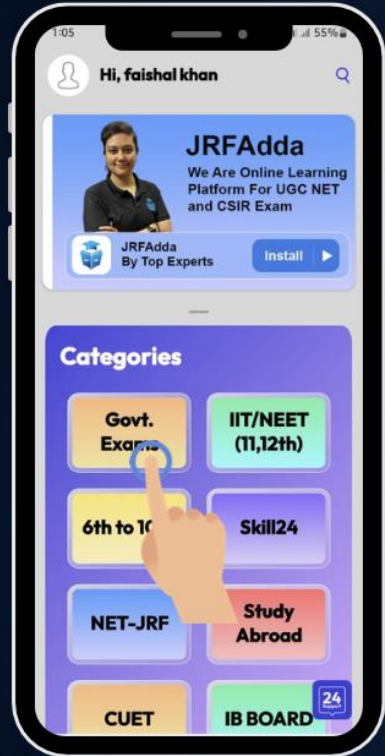
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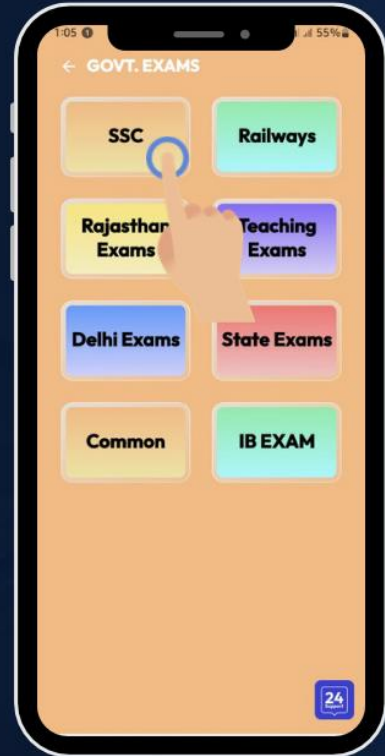
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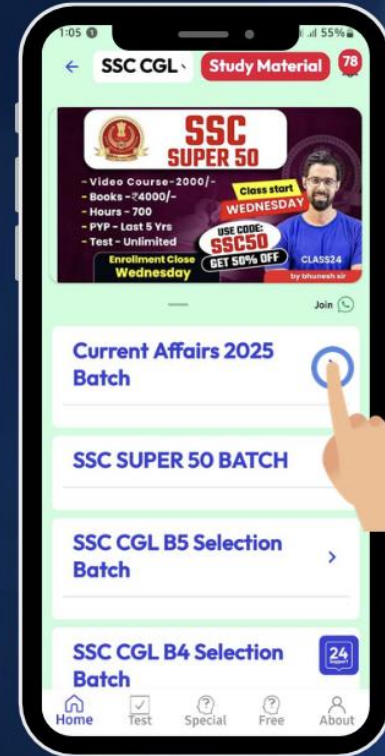
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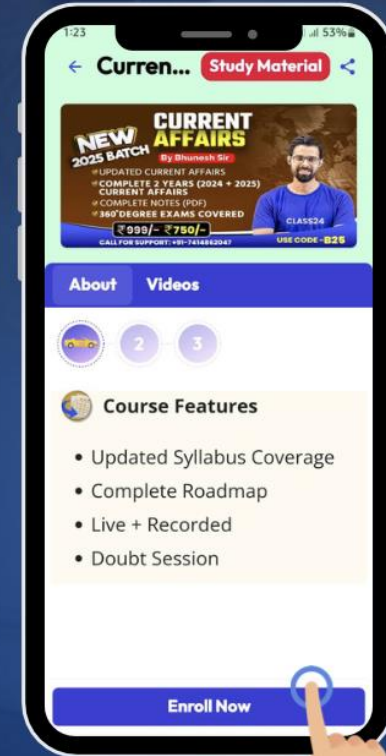
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Step 3



Step 4



*“Comparison
is the thief of
joy*

.” – Theodore Roosevelt



ON A RAMPAGE
Thousands flee wildfires in Los Angeles

BILATERAL RELATIONS
'India ready to aid Maldives defence'

NEWS » PAGE 4

PRASADI BHARATIYA DINAS

DIASPORA SUMMIT
Jalshankar kicks off youth event

NEWS » PAGE 6

DATA POINT
Centre's share in States' revenue sees a surge

States struggling to spruce up own income

OPINION » PAGE 9

AUSTRALIAN OPEN
Sinner and Sabalenka get the top billing

SPORT » PAGE 16

INSIDE



Modi launches projects worth ₹2 lakh cr. in A.P.

VISAKHAPATNAM
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday virtually launched projects worth over ₹2 lakh crore in Visakhapatnam in what was his first visit to Andhra Pradesh after assuming the office of Prime Minister for the third consecutive term in 2024. » PAGE 2

'No mercy for accused in Anna University case'

CHENNAI
The Tamil Nadu police will have no mercy for the accused in the Anna University sexual assault case and spare no one if more persons are found to be involved in the crime, Chief Minister H.K. Stalin said in the State Assembly on Wednesday. He further said that the man arrested in the case was not a DMK member. » PAGE 2

Kochi police arrest Bobby Chemmannur

KOCHI
The Kochi City police on Wednesday evening arrested businessman Bobby Chemmannur on a complaint lodged by an actor with the Ernakulam Central police. He was taken into custody from outside his farmhouse in Wayanad on Wednesday and was brought to the Central station. » PAGE 2

APP, BJP spar over spending on govt. residences

NEW DELHI
The political feud over opulence continued in Delhi on Wednesday, with AAP and BJP accusing each other of extravagant spending on government residences. While BJP called the 6 Flagstaff Road bungalow 'Sheesh Mahal', AAP dubbed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence 'Raj Mahal'. » PAGE 5



Vikram Misri meets Taliban's 'Foreign Minister'

NEW DELHI
Marking the highest outreach with Afghanistan's Taliban regime, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Wednesday met with the Taliban's 'Foreign Minister' Masudul Haque in the United Arab Emirates. » PAGE 14

6 killed, 20 injured in stampede at Tirupati

Thousands of people had gathered to collect tickets for temple festival tomorrow; Chief Minister Naidu expresses shock over the incident and directs action against TTD employees found guilty

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUMALA

Six persons were killed and more than 20 critically injured in a stampede at Tirupati late on Wednesday evening as people jostled for tickets for the Vaikunta Ekadasi festival at the Tirumala temple on Friday, the Chairman of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Trust Board, B.R. Naidu, said.



Rush for darshan: People gathered near a ticket counter at Vishnu Nilasam, Tirupati on Wednesday. ANI

The TTD had set up around 90 counters at various locations in Tirupati and announced that tickets would be made available from 5 a.m. on Thursday. The announcement drew tens of thousands of people, eager to ensure their place for darshan. However, the over-

whelming crowd at the counters, including Vishnu Nilasam, Bairagipattada, and Ramachandra Pushkarini, led to chaos as the arrangements were reportedly not adequate. The police had a tough time controlling the crowd.

The injured were rushed to the government-run Sri Venkateswara Ramachandra Pushkarini Hospital for treatment. Authorities have yet to confirm the identities of the deceased and the injured. Andhra Pradesh Chief

Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu expressed shock over the incident and instructed the TTD and police officials to extend the best medical care. He called for strict action against the employees responsible for the incident.

Winter chill



Rowing on: A boat on a stream near Srinagar on a cold winter morning on Wednesday. IANS/ANSSAR

No report of any unusual outbreak pattern of HMPV in China right now, says WHO

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization in its contact with Chinese health officials and has not received any reports of unusual outbreak patterns, its latest disease outbreak report on Human metapneumovirus (HMPV) said. The WHO said the Chinese authorities reported that their healthcare system was not overwhelmed and that there had been no emergency declarations or responses triggered. "WHO continues to monitor respiratory viruses at global, regional, and country levels through collaborative surveillance systems, and provides up-



Staying prepared: The Ahmedabad Civil Hospital has opened male and female wards to isolate HMPV patients. PTI

dates as needed," it said. Based on data published by China, covering the period up to December 29, 2024, acute respiratory infections have increased during recent weeks and detection of seasonal influenza, rhinovirus, and HMPV, particularly in northern provinces of Chi-

na, has increased. The WHO said that though there had been an increase in respiratory pathogen detections, it had been within the range expected for this time of the year during the northern hemisphere winter. In China, influenza is among the most common-

Data Rules set to be rolled out by mid-2025: Vaishnaw

Yarghese K. George
AGENCY
NEW DELHI

The Union government is aiming at finalising and notifying the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, currently in a draft state, by the middle of the year, Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said.



"The consultations so far have been extensive, and people are by and large okay with the provisions," Mr. Vaishnaw said in an exclusive interview with The Hindu on Wednesday. "I don't see too many amendments coming in the final notification beyond some tweaks." While large firms are prepared to comply quickly with most of the Rules, Mr. Vaishnaw said that the implementation of the Act would be digital in nature. The same approach has been followed in at-

The law has been drafted in a way to ensure the functioning and autonomy of the board

The consultations so far have been extensive, and people are by and large okay with the provisions

Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology

least one other institution: the Grievance Appellate Committee, which deals with social media complaints under the IT Rules, 2021.

Promoting components On electronics manufacturing, Mr. Vaishnaw said, "We are working on a programme for promoting and incentivising component manufacturing in our country", adding to existing schemes for IT hardware and semiconductors.

FULL INTERVIEW ON » PAGE 5

Gold googly bamboozles import data

Vikas Dhot
NEW DELHI

In what may constitute the steepest revision in India's trade data in recent times, the Centre has revised India's import bill for November 2024 by almost six billion dollars to \$63.86 billion from the record tally of \$70 billion reported as quick estimates by the Commerce Ministry last month, led by a sharp \$5 billion downward revision in gold imports.

The overall import bill for the first eight months of 2024-25, which was reckoned to have grown 8.35% at \$486.73 billion.

FULL REPORT » PAGE 12

1 body retrieved from Assam mine



A diver comes out from the flooded coal mine during the ongoing rescue operations in Umrangso, Assam, on Wednesday. AFP

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Army divers on Wednesday retrieved the body of a Nepalese miner from a flooded coal mine Dima Hasao district of Assam. Despite efforts by multiple rescue agencies and a remotely operated search vehicle, no signs have yet been found of the other eight miners who have been trapped for more than 48 hours.

assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that Army's 21 Para Divers had recovered a body from the bottom of the coal mine on Wednesday morning. "The body recovered has been identified as that of Ganga Bahadur Srestha from Udaypur district in Nepal," he said.

Meanwhile, the BJP-ruled North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council has come under fire for allegedly allowing illegal coal mining in the area.

Rescue efforts Assam's Special Director-General of Police Harmeet Singh said that efforts were on, involving multiple agencies, to locate the remaining trapped miners, including seven from Assam and one from West Bengal. Overnight rains did not

Debolal Gorlosa, the Chief Executive Member of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council, has been under fire for allegedly allowing illegal coal mining operations in the area. The BJP rules the council, which encompasses the Dima Hasao district.

Data Rules set to be rolled out by mid-2025: Vaishnaw

Varghese K. George

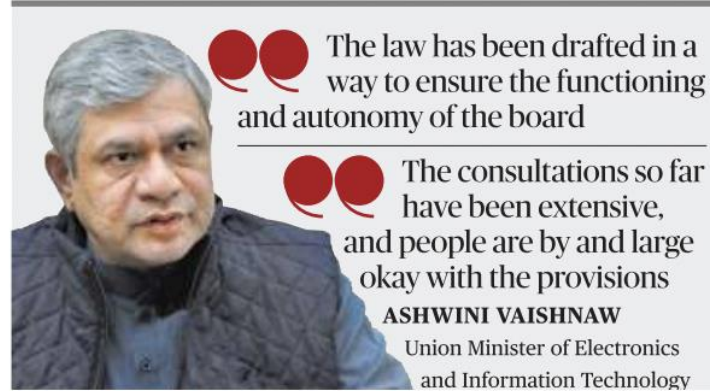
Aroon Deep

NEW DELHI

The Union government is aiming at finalising and notifying the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, currently in a draft state, by the middle of the year, Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw has said.

“The consultations so far have been extensive, and people are by and large okay with the provisions,” Mr. Vaishnaw said in an exclusive interview with *The Hindu* on Wednesday. “I don’t see too many amendments coming in the final notification beyond some tweaks.”

While large firms are prepared to comply quickly with most of the Rules, Mr. Vaishnaw said that a maximum of two years are being given for implementation. This will allow certain categories of data fidu-



ciaries some more time to prepare for the full implementation of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, which the Rules seek to operationalise. The government is currently accepting stakeholder comments on the draft until February 18.

“The law has been drafted in a way to ensure the functioning and autonomy of the Personal Data Protection Board of India,” Mr. Vaishnaw said, adding that the implementation of the Act would be digital in nature. The same approach has been followed in at

least one other institution: the Grievance Appellate Committee, which deals with social media complaints under the IT Rules, 2021.

Promoting components


On electronics manufacturing, Mr. Vaishnaw said, “We are working on a programme for promoting and incentivising component manufacturing in our country”, adding to existing schemes for IT hardware and semiconductors.

FULL INTERVIEW ON

» PAGE 5



- **Overview**

- The Union Government is finalizing the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2023**, expected to be implemented by mid-2025.
 - केंद्र सरकार डिजिटल व्यक्तिगत डेटा संरक्षण नियम (DPDP), 2023 को अंतिम रूप दे रही है, जिसे 2025 के मध्य तक लागू करने की योजना है।
- 



- **Consultation Process**

- Extensive consultations have been conducted, and the majority of stakeholders have expressed agreement with the provisions.

- व्यापक परामर्श किए गए हैं, और अधिकांश हितधारकों ने प्रावधानों पर सहमति व्यक्त की है।




- Stakeholder feedback on the draft rules is being accepted until **February 18, 2025**.



- मसौदा नियमों पर **18 फरवरी 2025** तक हितधारकों से सुझाव लिए जा रहे हैं।



- **Implementation Timeline**

- A maximum of two years will be given for full compliance, especially for certain categories of data fiduciaries.
 - कुछ डेटा संरक्षकों के लिए पूर्ण अनुपालन के लिए अधिकतम दो साल का समय दिया जाएगा।
 - Large firms are already prepared to comply with most of the rules.
 - बड़ी कंपनियां अधिकांश नियमों के अनुपालन के लिए पहले से ही तैयार हैं
- 




- **Provisions of the Law**

- Ensures the functioning and autonomy of the **Personal Data Protection Board of India**.



- भारत के **व्यक्तिगत डेटा संरक्षण बोर्ड** के संचालन और स्वायत्तता को सुनिश्चित करता है।



- Digital implementation of the Act is planned, similar to other institutions like the **Grievance Appellate Committee** under the IT Rules, 2021.



- अधिनियम का डिजिटलीकरण लागू किया जाएगा, जैसा कि IT नियम, 2021 के तहत **शिकायत अपील समिति** में हुआ है।



1. Focus on Electronics Manufacturing

1. Promotes **local manufacturing of electronic components**, IT hardware, and semiconductors.
2. इलेक्ट्रॉनिक घटकों, IT हार्डवेयर और सेमीकंडक्टर्स के **स्थानीय निर्माण** को बढ़ावा दिया जाएगा।








- **Historical Context**

- The DPDP Act, 2023, aligns India's data protection framework with global standards like the **EU's GDPR**.

- DPDP अधिनियम, 2023, भारत के डेटा संरक्षण ढांचे को **EU के GDPR** जैसे वैश्विक मानकों के अनुरूप बनाता है।

- **Political Implications**

- Enhances user data privacy while fostering trust in India's digital economy.
 - उपयोगकर्ता डेटा गोपनीयता को मजबूत करता है और भारत की डिजिटल अर्थव्यवस्था में विश्वास बढ़ाता है।
 - Ensures accountability among corporations and strengthens citizen rights over personal data.
 - निगमों की जवाबदेही सुनिश्चित करता है और व्यक्तिगत डेटा पर नागरिकों के अधिकारों को मजबूत करता है।
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3 die after taking cake essence in Mysuru jail

The Hindu Bureau
 MYSURU

Three persons serving their sentence in Mysuru Central Prison died after allegedly consuming essence used in the preparation of cakes.

The three — Nagaraju, 36, Madhesha, 32, and Ramash, 28 — died at K.R. Hospital, where they were undergoing treatment, according to Chief Superintendent of Mysuru Central Prison P.S. Ramachandra. They were deployed in the bakery unit of the prison and had reportedly consumed essence used in the preparation of cake on December 24. A complaint has been registered at the jurisdictional Mandali police station about the deaths.

Union govt. yet to wake up from its slumber on Dam Safety Act, says SC

Top court was hearing plea seeking lowering of the permissible water level at Mullaperiyar dam; it says Centre has not fully implemented the 2021 law to prevent disasters related to dams; court issues notice to Centre and posts it for January 22

Krishnadas Rajagopal
 NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday orally said the Union government was yet to wake up from its 'slumber' and fully implement a nearly five-year-old law to prevent disasters related to dams and ensure their safe functioning.

A three-judge Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant said the Dam Safety Act, 2021, was "resting on paper" after the State of Kerala argued that "nothing has been done", including the constitution of a National Committee on Dam Safety. "Despite Par-



Safety check: Supreme Court-appointed monitoring committee members inspect Mullaperiyar dam in Kerala, on June 13, 2024.

liament having passed this Act, we are agnostic that the Executive is yet to wake up from its slumber," Justice Dipankar Datta, on the Bench with Justice Ujjal

Bhuyan, remarked. The court was hearing a petition filed by advocate-petitioner Mathews Nedumpara, who submitted that a breach at the 129-year-old limestone-and-surfki built Mullaperiyar dam may lead to the deaths of lakhs of people spread across five townships. The lawyer sought a lowering of the permissible water level at Mullaperiyar dam from 142 ft to 120 ft.

Section 5 of the 2021 Act mandates the constitution of the National Committee on Dam Safety within 60 days of the commencement of the Act. The committee is to be reconstituted every three years. "Nothing has been done in the years between 2021 and 2025..." The Centre did nothing on the basis of this Act," senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, appearing for

Kerala, claimed. However, Tamil Nadu, represented by senior advocate V. Krishnamurthy, informed the Bench that the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) was formed under the Act. But Justice Kant reacted that there was no provision for a "supervisory committee" in the 2021 Act. The court wondered how the NDSA was formed even before the constitution of the National Committee.

The Supreme Court issued notice to the Centre and the NDSA and directed a copy of petition to be sent to Attorney-General K. Venkataramani and posted the matter for January 22.

Chennai Metro Rail to provide roofing in elevated stations

The Hindu Bureau
 CHENNAI

Every time it rains, whether a heavy downpour or mild shower, rainwater spills over onto the platform, making it slippery for passengers. In bid to address this issue, Chennai Metro Rail is taking up work to cover some of the areas in the stations across the Phase I and Phase II extension network.

The Metro Rail has an operational network of 54-km, which includes 20 elevated stations. In certain areas of the stations, such as the staircases, entry points, and platforms, passengers are facing difficulty walking when it rains.

Sagavan, a regular user of metro, said, "As such,

the station flooring in the platforms is quite slippery and the situation gets further exacerbated during rain. We have to walk carefully. So, if the authorities are providing roofing, then it is a welcome move." According to officials, in stations like Guindy, Nanganallur and Meenambakkam, the work is already in progress. They are covering few of the areas, where there is no roof, with toughened glass and aluminium louvers.

"Passengers have told us about the difficulties. We have identified the stations where the issue persists and will complete it on priority. We hope to complete the work in Phase I network, in a couple of months," an official said.

Businessman arrested on actor's complaint in Kerala

The Hindu Bureau
 KOCHI

The Kochi City police on Wednesday evening arrested businessman Bobby Chemmanur on a complaint lodged by a woman actor with the Ernakulam Central police.

The arrest came within 24 hours after the woman brought to the Central station around 7 p.m.



Bobby Chemmanur

The police have booked him under various provisions and will produce him before the magistrate on Thursday.

The actor, in her complaint, accused him of repeatedly making sexually loaded comments about her on social media and also in person while attending an inaugural function. She had also given the police digital evidence to prove her accusations. She had personally spoken to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan demanding action.

Shortly after he was taken into custody, the actor took to social media to thank the Chief Minister and the Kerala Police.

HC says commenting on woman's body is sexual harassment

The Hindu Bureau
 KOCHI

The Kerala High Court has held that comments by a man on a woman's body constitute a sexually coloured remark and that amount to an offence of sexual harassment.

Justice A. Badhardeen made the observation recently while dismissing a petition by a former employee of the Kerala State Electricity Board in Aluva

seeking to quash a case registered against him on the complaint of a woman employee.

She had alleged that he had been sexually harassing her since 2013 and had used vulgar language against her in 2013 and sent objectionable messages and voice calls.

The court observed that the prosecution had specifically made out a *prima facie* case to attract the provisions alleged against him.

Six Maoists surrender before Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah

The Hindu Bureau
 BENGALURU

Six Maoists, who were active in Karnataka, surrendered before Chief Minister Siddaramaiah here on Wednesday.

With this, Karnataka had taken a big step towards becoming "Naxal Free", Mr. Siddaramaiah announced, saying that the government would soon take a call on the dissolution of Anti Naxal Force (ANF). Only one known Maoist activist, who quit



A group of Maoists surrendering before Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

the movement several months ago, is still at large. On behalf of the Maoists, Mandagana Latha, leader of the group

in the State, handed over her olive green uniform and received a copy of the Constitution from the Mr. Siddaramaiah.

IN BRIEF



Makaravilakku preparations in full swing at Sabarimala

With only a few days remaining for the Makaravilakku festival, preparations are in full swing at Sabarimala to ensure its smooth conduct. The festival will be celebrated on January 14. Pathanamthitta Collector S. Premkrishnan on Wednesday inspected key Makaravilakku vaiting points, including Latha Sathram, Parjipara, Iavungal, Ayyanmaala, Nelimala, Atanamth West, Atanamth East, and Pampa Hilltop. Efforts are under way to provide drinking water, toilet facilities, and adequate street lighting in coordination with local bodies.

Senior IAS officer appears before ACB in Formula E case

Senior IAS officer Arvind Kumar, former special chief secretary to Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD), appeared before the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) headquarters in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, on Wednesday for quizzing in connection with alleged financial irregularities during the Hyderabad Formula E race in February 2023. Meanwhile, former chief engineer of Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority, B.L.N. Reddy, appeared before the Enforcement Directorate over the case registered by the agency.

HC suspends CPI(M) activists' sentence in Perive murder

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Wednesday suspended the sentence of five years' simple imprisonment given to CPI(M) leader K. Kumbhiraman and three others by the Ernakulam CBI Special Court for murdering Youth Congress activists Sarath Lal P.K. and Kripesh at Perive in Kasargod in 2019. The court ordered the suspension by executing a bond for ₹50,000 each with two solvent sureties each for the like sum to the satisfaction of the jurisdictional court and on condition that they shall deposit the fine of ₹10,000 each awarded by the CBI court.

Cool home



Weaver's web: A spider web glistening with dewdrops on a misty morning at the Hesarghatta meadows in Bengaluru as the city witnesses a drop in temperature on Wednesday. K. MURUKUMARAN

British changed place names to destroy the Telugu culture: Naidu

The Hindu Bureau
 RAJAHMENDRAVARAM

Former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu said on Wednesday that the British had changed the names of many places to destroy the Telugu culture.

He inaugurated the two-day Prapancha Telugu Mahasabha at Godavari Institute of Engineering and Technology (GIET) here. Addressing the gathering, he said, "In the future, Rajamahendravaram should not be called as Rajahmundry as insisted by



M. Venkaiah Naidu

The much-awaited 'Flamingo Festival 2025' is all set to be conducted at Sullurpeta in Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh from January 18 to 20.

Expectations are high among nature lovers and birdwatchers as the fest was last conducted in 2020. Over 200 varieties of birds are expected to fly to this region during this season. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has already informed the district administration to conduct the event on the lines of a State festival.

The three-day event will



Winged visitors: A similar flamingo festival was conducted at Sullurpeta in 2020. MAGARA GOPAL

be spread across five locations including Nelapattu, B.V. Palem, Atakanthippa, Sri City and Sullurpeta. According to Tirupati district Collector S. Venkateswar, a three-day session will be conducted on eco-friendly biodiversity at Sri City, bird

POCSO case against Yediyurappa: victim's brother seeks justice

Shreyas H.S.
 BENGALURU

Upset over the case related to the petition of former Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa to quash the chargesheet against him under provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, dragging on for eight months now, the victim's elder brother has appealed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take steps to ensure speedy justice.

In March 2024, the Sadasivhanagar police booked Mr. Yediyurappa under POCSO Act for allegedly sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl on February 2, 2024, at his residence. The case was later transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department

(CID), which chargesheeted Mr. Yediyurappa in June 2024.

Following this, the former Chief Minister filed a writ petition in the High Court appealing the court to quash the chargesheet against him in July 2024. C.V. Nagesh, counsel for the accused, is yet to conclude his arguments in the case.

In a five-minute video titled 'Need for justice' posted on social media, the brother said he had taken to social media with deep sorrow as his family was undergoing difficult times. "Judiciary is the only hope we have and we appeal to the State government to take the case seriously. I urge the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister to ensure justice for my family," he said.

The government has developed infrastructure facilities by integrating it with Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Local residents will be prioritised at the festival, Mr. Venkateswar asserted, hinting that the problem faced by the residents of the eco-sensitive zone will be addressed, within the purview of the law.

While inspecting the site along with Sullurpeta MLA Nelayala Vijayarsi, Region-1 Director (Tourism) Ramana Prasad, DPO (Wildlife) Radhika and District Tourism Officer Janardhan Reddy on Tuesday, he directed the officials to make the event a successful one.

A.P. set to hold 3-day Flamingo Festival

The Hindu Bureau

TIRUPATI

The much-awaited 'Flamingo Festival 2025' is all set to be conducted at Sullurpeta in Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh from January 18 to 20.

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The three-day event will



Winged visitors: A similar flamingo festival was conducted at Sullurpeta in 2020. NAGARA GOPAL

be spread across five locations including Nelapattu, B.V. Palem, Atakanithippa, Sri City and Sullurpeta. According to Tirupati district Collector S. Venkateswar, a three-day session will be conducted on eco-friendly biodiversity at Sri City, bird

watching spots at Nelapattu and Atakanithippa, and boating facility at B.V. Palem as a tourist attraction.

Stalls will be set up at the Government Junior College campus at Sullurpeta, where cultural programmes will be conduct-

ed. The government has developed infrastructure facilities by integrating it with Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

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- **A.P. Set to Host 3-Day Flamingo Festival in January 2025**
- **Overview**
- The much-awaited **Flamingo Festival 2025** will be held at **Sullurpeta**, in Tirupati district, Andhra Pradesh, from **January 18 to 20, 2025**.
- **2025 का फ्लेमिंगो फेस्टिवल 18 से 20 जनवरी तक आंध्र प्रदेश के तिरुपति जिले के सुलुरपेटा में आयोजित किया जाएगा।**





- **Attraction for Birdwatchers**

- Over **200 species of birds**, including flamingos, are expected to migrate to the region during the season.

- लगभग **200 प्रकार के पक्षी**, जिनमें फ्लेमिंगो भी शामिल हैं, मौसम के दौरान इस क्षेत्र में आने की संभावना है।



- The event will cater to nature lovers and bird enthusiasts.

- यह आयोजन प्रकृति प्रेमियों और पक्षी प्रेमियों के लिए खास होगा

- **Locations and Activities**

- The event will span across **five locations**:

- **Nelapattu, B.V. Palem, Atakanithippa, Sri City, and Sullurpeta.**

- उत्सव पांच स्थानों में आयोजित होगा:

- **नेलापट्टू, बीवी पालेम, अटकानितिप्पा, श्री सिटी, और सुलुरपेटा।**

- **Eco-friendly biodiversity sessions** and birdwatching will be conducted at Sri City and other locations.

- **श्री सिटी** और अन्य स्थानों पर पारिस्थितिकी के अनुकूल जैव विविधता सत्र और पक्षी अवलोकन किया जाएगा।

- **Boating facilities** at B.V. Palem will attract tourists.

- **बीवी पालेम** में नौका विहार की सुविधा पर्यटकों को आकर्षित करेगी।

Infrastructure and Local Participation

- The government has integrated **MGNREGA** to improve infrastructure facilities for the festival.
- सरकार ने उत्सव के लिए बुनियादी ढांचा सुधारने के लिए **मनरेगा** योजना का उपयोग किया है।
- Local residents will be prioritized, addressing concerns of eco-sensitive zones.
- स्थानीय निवासियों को प्राथमिकता दी जाएगी, और पर्यावरण-संवेदनशील क्षेत्रों की समस्याओं का समाधान किया जाएगा।

Cultural Programs

- **Stalls** showcasing cultural activities will be set up at Sullurpeta Government Junior College.
- सुलुरपेटा गवर्नमेंट जूनियर कॉलेज में सांस्कृतिक कार्यक्रमों के लिए स्टॉल लगाए जाएंगे।



- **Historical Context**




- The Flamingo Festival is a **biennial event** previously held in 2020.

- फ्लेमिंगो फेस्टिवल एक **द्विवार्षिक आयोजन** है, जिसे पहले 2020 में आयोजित किया गया था।

- **Geographical Significance**

- Sullurpeta and Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary are part of the **Pulicat Lake ecosystem**, an important site for migratory birds.

- सलुरपेटा और नेलापट्ट पक्षी अभयारण्य **पुलिकट झील पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र** का हिस्सा हैं, जो प्रवासी पक्षियों के लिए महत्वपूर्ण स्थल है।



IN BRIEF

Filmmaker and poet Prithvi Nandy passes away at 73

Poet, painter, film producer and former parliamentarian Prithvi Nandy passed away at 73 on Wednesday...

ISRO delays satellite docking experiment again, citing drift

ISRO has once again postponed the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDRx) involving two satellites, citing excessive drift during a crucial manoeuvre...

Centre's decision to abolish post of Adviser to Chandigarh Union Territory sparks a row

Vikas Vasudeva CHANDIGARH

Political controversy erupted in Punjab after the Union government issued a notification abolishing the post of the Adviser to the Union Territory Chandigarh...

India balancing on twin pillars of technology, tradition: Jaishankar

At the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, External Affairs Minister says the nation's quest is unique because development is based on a democratic framework; he lauded the youth, at home and abroad, for contribution to innovations in every sector

Satyansundar Barik BHUBANESWAR

India is progressing within a democratic framework, balancing on the twin pillars of technology and tradition, said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar...



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Sports Minister Manoj Kumar Mishra, Odisha CM Mohan Mahi and Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday.

"We are today well on the way to address long-standing challenges to build a modern, inclusive and progressive society. Our quest is unique because the largest nation in the world is developing in that manner in a democratic framework..."

"The youth of the country can be the defining factor in the pace of that endeavour and the realisation of the goals, he added."

Mr. Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the PBD on Thursday.

"The very country that was predicted to go under ended up supplying vaccines and medicines to the entire world. A different kind of observatory is what we see in the realm of space, where there is a growing competition internationally..."

"In a digital era, the scale of UPI transactions speaks volumes, both of our infrastructure and of our mindsets. The new India and Tourism - 100 and 100-plus unicorns, has calling cards like Drone Di-De, Aal Tailoring Labs, backathons, green hydro-gas mission and nano-fertilisers..."

"Guest of honour Dev Prasad, a person of Indian origin and chief executive officer of Newsweek, narrated how diligent effort had enabled a turnaround of the American media organisation that he helms."

ICMR gets low-cost tech to detect iron deficiency

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

AnemiaPhone, a technology developed by Cornell University researchers to accurately, quickly, and cheaply assess iron deficiency, has been transferred to the Indian Council of Medical Research...

"While Odisha's past is steeped in history, its present is defined by transformation and progress. Today, Odisha stands as a leader in mining and industries such as steel and aluminium..."

"The technology requires a small finger stick, a drop of blood on a test strip similar to a COVID-19 home test, and a few minutes for the reader to assess..."

"The technology requires a small finger stick, a drop of blood on a test strip similar to a COVID-19 home test, and a few minutes for the reader to assess. The information is uploaded to a clinical database via a mobile phone, wireless tablet or computer..."

Prioritise studies on oilseeds, rice, pulses hybrids, says official

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Endorsing the use of hybrid seeds to increase crop production and reduce input dependency, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister P.K. Mishra said here on Wednesday that hybrid research has to produce products that have higher productivity than open-pollinated seed varieties...

"We need to bring hybrid pigeon pea to market and scale it up. This will help in bridging availability gap in pulses. Similarly, in rice, we should increase productivity using hybrids. This is a priority..."

PM's Principal Secretary says hybrid seeds have to be affordable to smallholder farmers

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

"The committee has time till the first week of the next session of Parliament, which is likely to begin on January 31, leaving it with just three weeks of time..."

"He added that the Union Ministry of Law and Justice has to ensure that the State legislature sub-or-

Simultaneous elections: MPs on House committee seek more time for deliberations

Sobhana K. Nair NEW DELHI

At the first meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on two bills on conducting simultaneous polls on Wednesday, Opposition members argued that the panel should be given at least a year to complete its work...

"The meeting began with a presentation by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice on the provisions of the Bills."

"Opposition members said the two bills violated the basic structure doctrine of the Constitution since they sought to make the State legislature sub-or-

ordinate to the national legislature. Several members questioned the government's argument that simultaneous polls are better for the economy. According to sources, Lok Sabha members argued that the panel should be given at least a year to complete its work, considering the scope and scale of deliberations required."

"The committee has time till the first week of the next session of Parliament, which is likely to begin on January 31, leaving it with just three weeks of time. The meeting began with a presentation by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice on the provisions of the Bills."

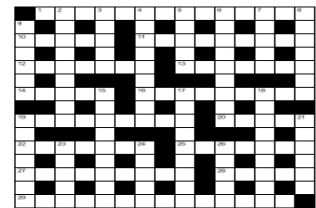
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TH CROSSWORD 14378



- Across 1. Fantastic in space (3,2,4,5) 10. Top accommodation in a country revisited (5) 11. 9 stores cater cut fruit (9) 12. Close to biting lip - A way to show displeasure (7) 13. Santa cross caught me making sour cream (7) 14. Controls - they're there inside (5)

To solve this puzzle online, get access to our crossword site at: https://www.thehindu.com/crossword/

- 16. Must maintain silence - finally becomes lifeless (9) 19. New tone, in case one is from Guangdong (9) 20. Close to painting in red paint (5) 22. Ventilates after a time delay (7) 25. State a subject in the beginning (7) 27. Work behind time with a singularly crazy boss... (3,6) 28. ...due to having no name (5) 29. Studies involving standard allocation for wars and conflicts (14) Down 2. Subject of Britain and weather, one on one (9) 3. Play ball - it's essentially entertainment (5) 4. Fruit - Argentine bananas? (9) 9. Remove top of the metal, push in the centre of the bone (5) 6. Being evasive about leaving part outside frame (9) 7. Something to eat in Madurai, Tamilnadu (5) 8. Time to settle what the man reportedly consumed (3,4) 9. Break bread with the first guest who comes in Harry (6) 15. Brief season is what is needed still (3) 17. 'In camera' arrangement - a Yankee object (9) 18. 'An homage to a Democrat' - speech follows (9) 19. Disorderly in accommodating all our tail leaders (7) 21. Spray cater over empty garage (6) 23. After a brief sentence, jail to make one mellow (5) 24. Informed about left cart (5) 26. Firstly, does he often tie it around his waist? (5)

SUDOKU

9x9 grid for a Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Solution to previous puzzle and solution to yesterday's Sudoku. Includes a difficulty rating of 5 stars.

FAITH

Andal shows the way

When Vishnu manifested as Varaha and rescued Ithoo Devi from the clutches of Hiranyaksha, She continues to remain sad and informed Varaha that as long as their children (mankind) remained imprisoned by the five ahankaras (five indrias), they would never attain salvation. Perumal agrees with Her and points out that, specially in Kali Yuga, devotees would need far simpler but effective methods of reaching God. He suggests She appear on earth and guide them in an easy manner. She appeared as a divine child in Srivilliputtur in the Tamil month of Aadi under the Pooram star in Periazhwar's garden and showed devotees that heartfelt bhakti and prayer are enough to fetch His Mercy, said Damal S Ramakrishnan in a special discourse on D.V. Vasudevan, The Hindu's Faith columnist, on his centenary year. Periazhwar named her as Goda, with 'Go' referring to earth (since she came from it). 'Go' also refers to milch cows and she gave the milk of knowledge (gnana) to countless devotees.

As Goda, she was devoted to God and adorned herself with the garland made for Perumal before submitting it. When Periazhwar discovered this and put away the offering, a displeased God asked him to bring Him Andal's garland; Goda became Andal, as she had won over Perumal Himself with her devotion. She disseminated gnana by the simple methodology of gathering together and singing His praise, chanting His name systematically, so that devotion became an organic practice and flourishing from within. Her Tiruppavai verses sung in the month of Margazhi show the way.

ICMR gets low-cost tech to detect iron deficiency

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

AnemiaPhone, a technology developed by Cornell University researchers to accurately, quickly, and cheaply assess iron deficiency, has been transferred to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for integration into its programmes for anaemia alleviation, women's health, and maternal and child health.

A release issued by Cornell University said that AnemiaPhone would enable access to rapid screening, and diagnosis of iron deficiency at the point of need.

Iron deficiency is a leading cause of anaemia, which affects 50% to 70% of pregnant women in India.

The technology requires a small finger stick, a drop of blood on a test strip similar to a COVID-19 home test, and a few minutes for the reader to assess. The information is uploaded to a clinical database via mobile phone, wireless tablet or computer. Healthcare workers can interpret the test and provide guidance, triage and referral, or intervention on the spot.



- **ICMR Adopts Low-Cost Technology to Detect Iron Deficiency**

- **Overview**

- A **low-cost technology** called **AnemiaPhone**, developed by Cornell University, has been transferred to the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)**.




- This technology will be integrated into ICMR's programmes for **anaemia alleviation, women's health, and maternal and child health**.

- **About AnemiaPhone**
- Developed by researchers at **Cornell University**, the technology allows rapid, accurate, and affordable screening for **iron deficiency**.
- It uses a **small finger-stick blood sample**, analyzed via a test strip and a mobile device, much like a COVID-19 home test.
- Results are uploaded to a **clinical database** for real-time interpretation and guidance by healthcare workers.





- **Iron Deficiency in India**

- Iron deficiency is the leading cause of anaemia, affecting **50-70% of pregnant women** in India.
 - Anaemia poses significant health challenges, including complications during pregnancy and poor maternal and child outcomes.
- 



1.How It Works

1. The test requires:

1. A **finger stick** to collect a drop of blood.
2. Results processed within minutes.
3. Data uploaded via mobile phone, tablet, or computer for immediate analysis.

2. Healthcare workers can provide **on-the-spot interventions** based on the results.



- **Significance**

- 1. Healthcare Impact**

- 1. Enables **early detection** and intervention for anaemia, improving maternal and child health outcomes.
 - 2. Facilitates quick and cost-effective healthcare delivery in rural and underserved areas.

- 2. Technological Innovation**

- 1. Combines affordable healthcare with **digital innovation**, promoting technology-based solutions for public health issues.

- 3. Global Collaboration**

- 1. Showcases effective collaboration between **Cornell University** and Indian healthcare institutions like ICMR.



Predecessor	Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA)
Formation	1911; 113 years ago (as IRFA)
Type	Government Organisation
Legal status	Active
Headquarters	New Delhi, India
Location	 India
Key people	Rajiv Bahl , Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (Secretary, GoI – Department of Health Research)
Parent organization	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India
Budget	₹2,359.58 crore (US\$280 million) (2023–2024) ^[1]

China's long game in Africa

In 2022, when China established its first political training school in Tanzania, the Mwili Julius Nyerere Leadership School, its motivation was unambiguous. With an estimated cost of \$40 million, the school was a tool for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to shape the future political leaders of Africa following the Chinese principles of governance.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the 120 official members of the school's first cohort were from countries with long-standing historical ties to China. These countries continue to be ruled by the liberation parties that came into power through their pre-independence struggles. The countries include South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania. In fact, these six countries, along with Botswana, are also part of the former Liberation Movements of Southern Africa, an informal coalition meant to help one another address governance challenges and stay in power.

Clearly, the move by China to establish the political school is meant to strengthen its relationship and increase its influence among the policymakers of these countries. The political school is another platform for the leaders of these ruling liberation parties to enhance their governance capabilities through shared educational resources. This is also an example of China's broader strategy to shape Africa's political landscape by promoting its governance model based on the centrality of the ruling party and its control over the state.

Game of influence
There are several ways for a country to assert its influence. One way could be through fostering dialogue among the concerned parties to facilitate positive conversations. This also helps in building a strong global image for the mediator country. Historically, the U.S. has been the most influential international



Samir Bhattacharya
Associate Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation

mediator. However, China is increasingly asserting itself in this role, as seen in its involvement in resolving the Saudi Arabia-Iran and Niger-Benin disputes. As China seeks to establish an alternative world order — often complementary to, and sometimes in contrast with, the Western-led global system — it recognises the importance of Africa's support in various multilateral forums. Africa, with 55 countries, is a significant player in international relations. And so, Beijing is intensifying its efforts to build strong ties with Africa as part of its broader strategy to shift the global balance of power in its favour.

However, China's engagement in Africa's politics is not a recent phenomenon. Beijing has supported African independence movements, military endeavours, and governance structures. It has also helped develop African economies through investments in infrastructure and industrial projects. This historical relationship continues to be strong, as China intensifies its focus on strengthening ties with Africa's ruling parties.

Steady ties have remained a key part of China's public diplomacy with Africa. Every year, hundreds of African officials visit China for lectures at universities, visits to provincial governments, and cultural exchanges designed to familiarise them with Chinese traditions and governance practices.

Only now has China's game plan to influence African political elites expanded through the introduction of political schools. During the 8th Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2021, the two sides agreed to open over 100 political parties across 51 African countries.

China's growing influence in Africa is evident not only in the establishment of new educational institutions but also in the deepening of its political relationships. Kenya, for example, has expressed its interest in having a leadership school that would be

financed by and modelled on the CCP's Central Party School. These efforts are accompanied by investments in infrastructure. China funded the construction of Kenya's new foreign ministry headquarters, as the two countries were celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations. China is not only constructing new institutions, but also refurbishing many existing ones. For instance, China funded the renovation of the Herbert Chitepo School of Ideology in Zimbabwe. Through such initiatives, it aims to establish a governance model similar to its own, based on strong, centralised party systems that offer stability and control. This highlights the effectiveness of building reciprocal relationships, particularly in countries where leadership stability and centralisation are highly valued.

Chinese diplomacy in Africa
China's approach to Africa is built on decades of patient diplomacy. While the Nyerere Leadership School represents a significant milestone, it is only one piece of China's broader strategy to embed itself deeply within Africa's political fabric. China's long-term goal is to promote a Sino-centric world order in which it plays a central role in shaping global governance structures. However, China is also mindful of potential regime changes in Africa. It knows the importance of nurturing opposition parties to safeguard its interests in case political shifts occur. By establishing political schools and introducing ties with ruling and opposition parties, China is ensuring that its influence is intact regardless of political transitions.

China's long game in Africa is not just about economic influence or military strength. It is also about the subtle art of diplomacy and influencing through its strategic investments in Africa's political future. China is ensuring that it remains a key player in shaping Africa's governance structures for years to come.

A step behind Kejriwal

By playing second fiddle to Arvind Kejriwal, Atishi has sent out a clear message

STATE OF PLAY
Nikhil M. Babu
nikhil.m@thehindu.co.in

Delhi

Last September, when senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi assumed charge as Delhi Chief Minister, but sat next to an empty chair used by her predecessor Arvind Kejriwal, she sent out a clear message.

Many thought that the optics would end with this sentimental gesture and the new Chief Minister would soon get down to business. However, the first woman Chief Minister of AAP has been carefully playing second fiddle to Mr. Kejriwal. This can be seen even in her minor gestures — she walks with him but always just a small step behind, and addresses him sometimes as 'sir' or 'guru'.

Sources in the party say they do not want her to overshadow the AAP supremo in any way. Others say that the fact that she is a first-time MLA and was chosen to be Chief Minister over four-time members of the party and three-time MLAs may also have something to do with it. "It is not completely the party's plan. A lot of it has to do with her own decision. She genuinely does not want to overshadow Mr. Kejriwal," a source said.

A day after taking oath as Chief Minister, Ms. Atishi made her first major public appearance at a party event at Jantar Mantar. Her Cabinet colleague, Gopal Rai, spoke first, followed by Dilip Pandey, Manoj Sisodia, and Mr. Kejriwal. All of them then stood for the national anthem and left the stage. The Chief Minister did not speak a word.

The next day, when Ms. Atishi entered office, the party's plan became all the more evi-

longer a part of the Cabinet. On November 25, for instance, while addressing a press conference at the party headquarters, Mr. Kejriwal said that the Delhi Cabinet, headed by Ms. Atishi, had passed a proposal for providing pension to 80,000 more senior citizens. Speaking after him, Ms. Atishi said that "sir had made this possible."

The AAP's biggest announcement yet, ahead of the Assembly elections, was made on December 12. Starting the programme at the party headquarters, Ms. Atishi said, "Let us welcome our chief and beloved leader Arvind Kejriwal." She then shouted "Arvind Kejriwal!" The crowd replied, "Zindabad!" Mr. Kejriwal then proceeded to announce another Cabinet decision.

This was again a departure from how the AAP government functions — Cabinet decisions have always been announced by the Chief Minister from the Secretariat and not the party headquarters.

All this shows that while Ms. Atishi will be at the helm, she will always remain a step behind Mr. Kejriwal, thus cementing his position as the undisputed leader of the party. It is difficult even for AAP leaders to hide this clearly thought-out strategy. During the first day of the two-day session of the Assembly on September 26, BJP MLA and the Leader of Opposition, Vishendra Gupta, began his speech pointing to Ms. Atishi and Mr. Kejriwal. He said, "Chief Minister ji, Chief Minister ji, both of them are here. You can change his seat to any place (Ms. Atishi got the seat reserved for the Chief Minister, while Mr. Kejriwal was moved to seat 4B, but what difference does it make?). Many AAP leaders, including Ms. Atishi, smiled at the comment."

The Centre's share in States' revenue has surged in the last decade

The falling efficiency of States in collecting more taxes has deepened their dependency on the Centre

DATA POINT
Samreen Wani

Over the last decade, States have been relying more and more on transfers and grants from the Centre. In the last decade (FY16 to FY25), 23-30% of the total revenue of States was collected from the Centre as transfers. However, in the 2000s and the first half of 2010, the share was only 20-24%. Also, close to 65-70% of the non-tax revenue of States was collected from the Centre as grants in the last decade compared to the 2000s and the first half of the 2010s when the share was lower at 55-65%.

States have also not done enough to efficiently collect taxes to increase their own tax revenue. In addition, revenue from non-tax revenue, other than Central grants, has been diminishing.

The combination of these factors has meant that the dependency of States on Central funds has risen in recent years.

Chart 1 shows the share of States' own tax revenue, non-tax revenue, and Central transfers in their total revenue. For over a decade now, States' own tax revenue as a share of their total revenue has remained considerably below the 50% mark, while in the 2000s and the early 2010s, it had crossed the 50% mark for many years or remained close to it. Own tax revenue of States includes money raised through stamp duty, registration fees, motor vehicle tax, and other taxes, along with the State component in Goods and Services Tax (GST), or State GST (SGST).

Moreover, the share of non-tax revenue in States' total revenue is likely to go below the 20% mark in FY25 for the first time in the past 25 years. Non-tax revenue of States includes grants from the Centre, earnings from social, fiscal, economic, and general services rendered by the States, interest receipts, and dividends/profits from

State public sector enterprises.

While the share of own tax revenue and non-tax revenue of States has reduced, the share of transfers from the Centre has increased (23-30% in the last decade compared to 20-24% in the 15 years before that). This is depicted in Chart 1.

Kausik K. Bhadra, PFM consultant, UNICEF, says, "While expert advice responsibilities have been rapidly spiralling, the nearly stagnant own tax revenue mobilisation impedes the States' counter-cyclical and expansionary fiscal measures in a sustained manner to boost aggregate demand in the economy."

Mr. Bhadra adds that the share of own tax revenue in States' total revenue is largely driven by SGST. While SGST accounted for 15% of the States' total revenue in FY18, it currently makes up about 22%. This is shown in Chart 2. Consequently, the share of own tax revenue, without the contribution from SGST, has declined from 34% to 28%.

This means that not only is the share of States' own tax revenue consistently below the 50% mark, but also an increasing share of it is derived from SGST. It is important to note that the SGST is earned based on rates set by the GST Council and these rates have remained a bone of contention. In the past, Finance Ministers of many Opposition-ruled States including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal have spoken out against the Council's decisions.

Chart 3 shows a detailed split of States' non-tax revenue. It depicts the share of grants from the Centre, earnings from services, interest receipts, and dividends/profits from State public sector enterprises in the States' non-tax revenue. Interest receipts have declined from 5% of non-tax revenues in the last decade compared to the 2000s and first half of 2010 when it formed 50% of non-tax revenue. Moreover, the share of dividends and profits garnered from State public sector enterprises has remained under 1%.

Earnings from services rendered, such as public health (social service) and power (economic service), did not cross the 30% mark in the last decade. It is only estimated to cross the mark in FY25. Compare this to the 2000s and first half of 2010 when it crossed the mark for many years.

While the share of interest receipts and earnings from services has come down, the share of grants from the Centre has increased (65-70% in the last decade compared to 55-65% in the 15 years before that). This is shown in Chart 3.

Charts 1, 2 and 3 when read together show that the Centre is playing a major role in the States' revenue. The share of interest earned by the States. However, it is also true that many States are not efficiently collecting taxes using avenues at their disposal.

Table 4 shows the ratio of select States' own tax revenue to its GDP. The trend shows a marked decline in this ratio in six States in particular. For Tamil Nadu, the own tax revenue to GDP ratio has gradually declined from 7.72% in FY13-15 to 6.17% in FY 22-24. This has also been the case in Karnataka, Kerala, Bihar, Delhi, and Madhya Pradesh, too. While the ratio has risen in Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Odisha, and Uttarakhand, it has remained stagnant in other States.

Various States have undertaken a number of measures to improve tax collection from stamp duty, registration fees, and motor vehicle tax. This could likely be considered inadequate and sporadic efforts since these taxes lack a high degree of technical efficiency according to a number of studies," Mr. Bhadra says.

He adds that "the own tax revenue mobilisation efforts at the State level seems to be falling short of upholding the redistributive macroeconomic implications of tax policies."

www.samreenwani.com

Diminishing States' own revenues

The data for the chart were taken from the RBI's State Finances Report. It also includes The Hindu's calculations

Chart 1: The share of States' own tax revenue, non-tax revenue, and Central transfers in their total revenue (in %)

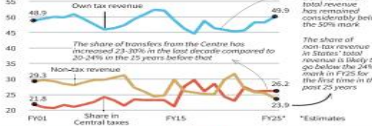


Chart 2: The share of States' SGST and own tax revenue (excluding SGST) in their total revenue (in %)



Chart 3: A detailed split of States' non-tax revenue. (Figures in %)

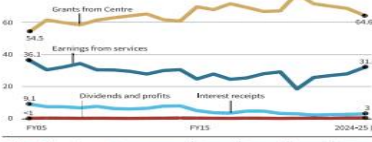


Table 4: Shows the ratio of select States' own tax revenue to their GDP (in %). FY17, FY21 and FY24 are revised estimates. FY25 is budget estimates.

State	FY13-15	FY16-18	FY19-21	FY22-24
Tamil Nadu	7.72%	6.82%	6.52%	6.22%
Karnataka	7.85%	6.94%	6.47%	6.29%
Kerala	6.94%	6.25%	5.44%	5.72%
Bihar	6.12%	5.26%	4.13%	4.37%
Delhi	7.02%	6.21%	6.28%	5.72%
Madhya Pradesh	7.74%	7.03%	6.27%	6.13%

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 3, 1975

Destruction of East India Co. records, probe urged

Madras, Jan. 5: The Tamil Nadu Commissioner of Archives and Historical Research, Mr. Badrinath, has urged the Government to appoint a high level committee to probe into the destruction of valuable East India Company records.

Mr. Badrinath told newsmen today that 86,208 East India Company records had been destroyed by the Tamil Nadu Archives between 1969 and 1974 though it was not done by specific authority of the State Government. These records did not relate to Kachchhavu, but certainly belonged to the crucial period between 1786 and 1828 and so they were of immense value for the historical study of South India, he said. He was important because they referred to the agricultural price, law and order situation, tenure system and the relationship between the East India Company and the Polgars, according to him.

Mr. Badrinath, who took charge as Commissioner of Archives in 1974, said as soon as the Tamil Nadu Government came to know of the destruction in the beginning of last year, it had immediately ordered that none of the old records should be destroyed in future until a clear policy had been formulated.

Explaining what he described as "senseless destruction" of public records all over India, Mr. Badrinath said this was not surprising in the country lacking a sound criterion to judge the value of a historical document. He said several valuable records relating to Indore State had been and were in the process of being destroyed in Madhya Pradesh. So it would be wrong to isolate what had happened at the Tamil Nadu Archives. The destruction was the work of bureaucrats, who were ignorant of the value of history, he maintained.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 9, 1925

News and notes.

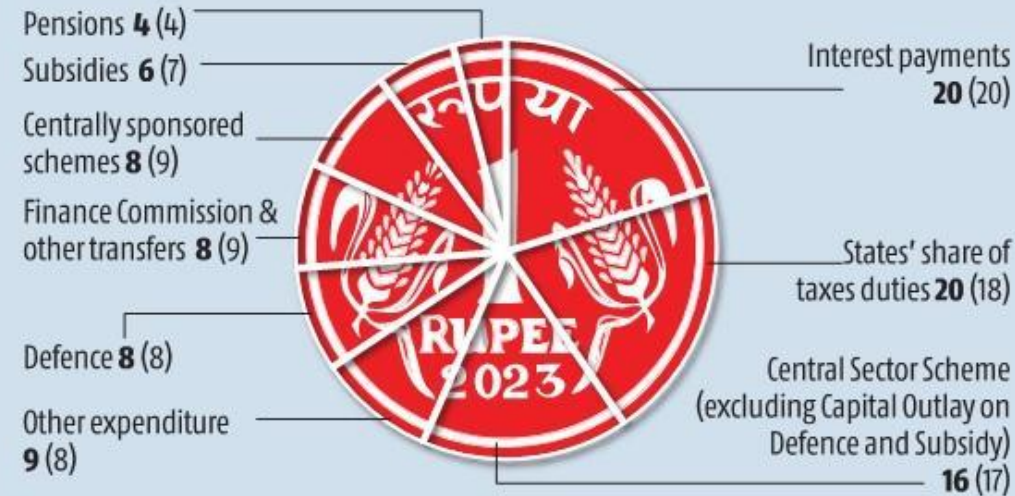
A Press Communique says: The Government of India have arranged that from the 12th December, 1924, the opium required for consumption in Sarawak will be sold direct to the Government of Sarawak, subject to certain subsidiary conditions. The agreement will remain in force for a period of five years and a fixed price will be paid. The number of chests of opium offered for sale by public auction in Calcutta is exclusive of any such quantity sold direct.

RUPEE COMES FROM *(in paise)*



Note: 1. Total receipts are inclusive of States' share of taxes and duties which have been netted in the table. 2. Figures have been rounded off; Figures in bracket represent FY24


RUPEE GOES TO *(in paise)*



1. Total expenditure is inclusive of States' share of taxes and duties which have been netted against receipts in the table. 2. Figures have been rounded off. Figures in bracket represent FY24



- **Overview**

- Over the last decade (FY16 to FY25), states in India have increasingly relied on **transfers and grants** from the Centre.
 - पिछले दशक (FY16 से FY25) में, भारत के राज्यों ने केंद्र से **स्थानांतरण और अनुदान** पर अधिक निर्भरता दिखाई है।
- 






- **Revenue Composition**

- **Own Tax Revenue:** States' own tax revenue as a share of total revenue has consistently stayed below **50%** in the last decade.

- **स्वयं के कर राजस्व:** पिछले दशक में राज्यों के कुल राजस्व में उनके स्वयं के कर का हिस्सा **50%** से नीचे रहा।

- **Non-Tax Revenue:** Non-tax revenue, which includes earnings from **services**, **interest receipts**, and **state-owned enterprises**, declined from 5-9% (2000s) to less than 5% recently.

- **गैर-कर राजस्व:** जिसमें सेवाओं से आय, ब्याज रसीदें, और राज्य सार्वजनिक उद्यमों की आय शामिल है, 2000 के दशक में 5-9% से घटकर हाल में 5% से कम हो गई।









- **Dependence on Central Transfers**

- Transfers from the Centre now constitute **23-30%** of states' total revenue, up from **20-24%** in the previous decade.

- केंद्र से स्थानांतरण अब राज्यों के कुल राजस्व का **23-30%** है, जो पिछले दशक के **20-24%** से अधिक है।



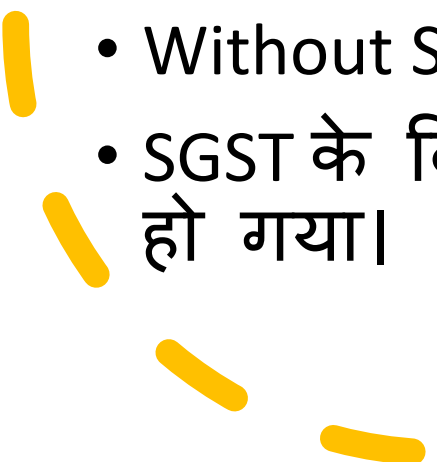
- Grants from the Centre as a percentage of non-tax revenue rose to **65-70%** in FY25 compared to **55-60%** earlier.



- गैर-कर राजस्व में केंद्र से मिलने वाले अनुदान का हिस्सा FY25 में **65-70%** तक बढ़ गया, जो पहले **55-60%** था।



- **SGST Contribution**

- SGST forms a significant part of states' own tax revenue, rising from **15% in FY18** to **22%** in FY25.
 - SGST राज्यों के स्वयं के कर राजस्व का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा है, जो FY18 में **15%** से बढ़कर FY25 में **22%** हो गया।
 - Without SGST, states' own tax revenue declined from **34% to 28%**.
 - SGST के बिना, राज्यों का स्वयं का कर राजस्व **34% से घटकर 28%** हो गया।
- 

1. Declining Own Tax to GSDP Ratio

1. States like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Bihar have seen a decline in the ratio of **own tax revenue to GSDP**. For instance, Tamil Nadu's ratio fell from **7.72% (FY13-15)** to **6.17% (FY22-24)**.
2. तमिलनाडु, केरल, और बिहार जैसे राज्यों में स्वयं के कर राजस्व और GSDP के अनुपात में गिरावट देखी गई है। उदाहरण के लिए, तमिलनाडु का अनुपात FY13-15 में **7.72%** से घटकर FY22-24 में **6.17%** हो गया।



- **Challenges Identified**

1. Inefficient Tax Collection

1. Many states fail to effectively collect taxes from **stamp duty, registration fees, and motor vehicle tax.**
2. कई राज्य स्टांप शुल्क, पंजीकरण शुल्क, और मोटर वाहन कर से प्रभावी कर संग्रह करने में विफल हैं।



2. Overdependence on Centre

1. Heavy reliance on the Centre makes states vulnerable to fiscal shocks.
2. केंद्र पर अत्यधिक निर्भरता राज्यों को वित्तीय झटकों के प्रति संवेदनशील बनाती है।

Diminishing States' own revenues

The data for the charts were taken from the RBI's State Finances Report. It also includes The Hindu's calculations

Chart 1: The share of States' own tax revenue, non-tax revenue, and Central transfers in their total revenue (in %)

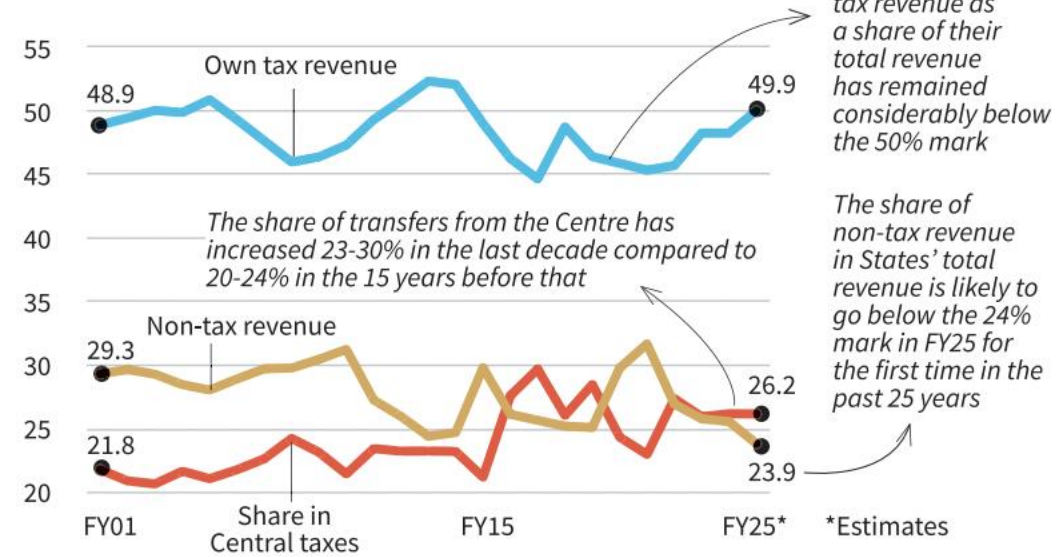


Chart 2: The share of States' SGST and own tax revenue (OTR) without SGST in their total revenue (in %)

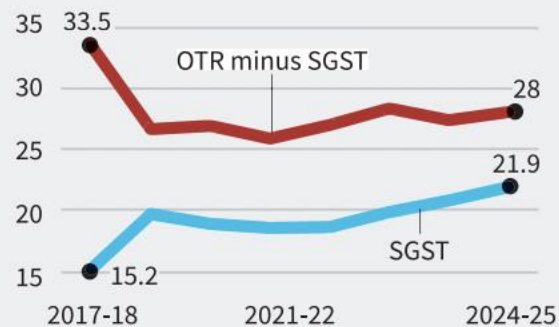


Chart 3: A detailed split of States' non-tax revenue. (Figures in %)

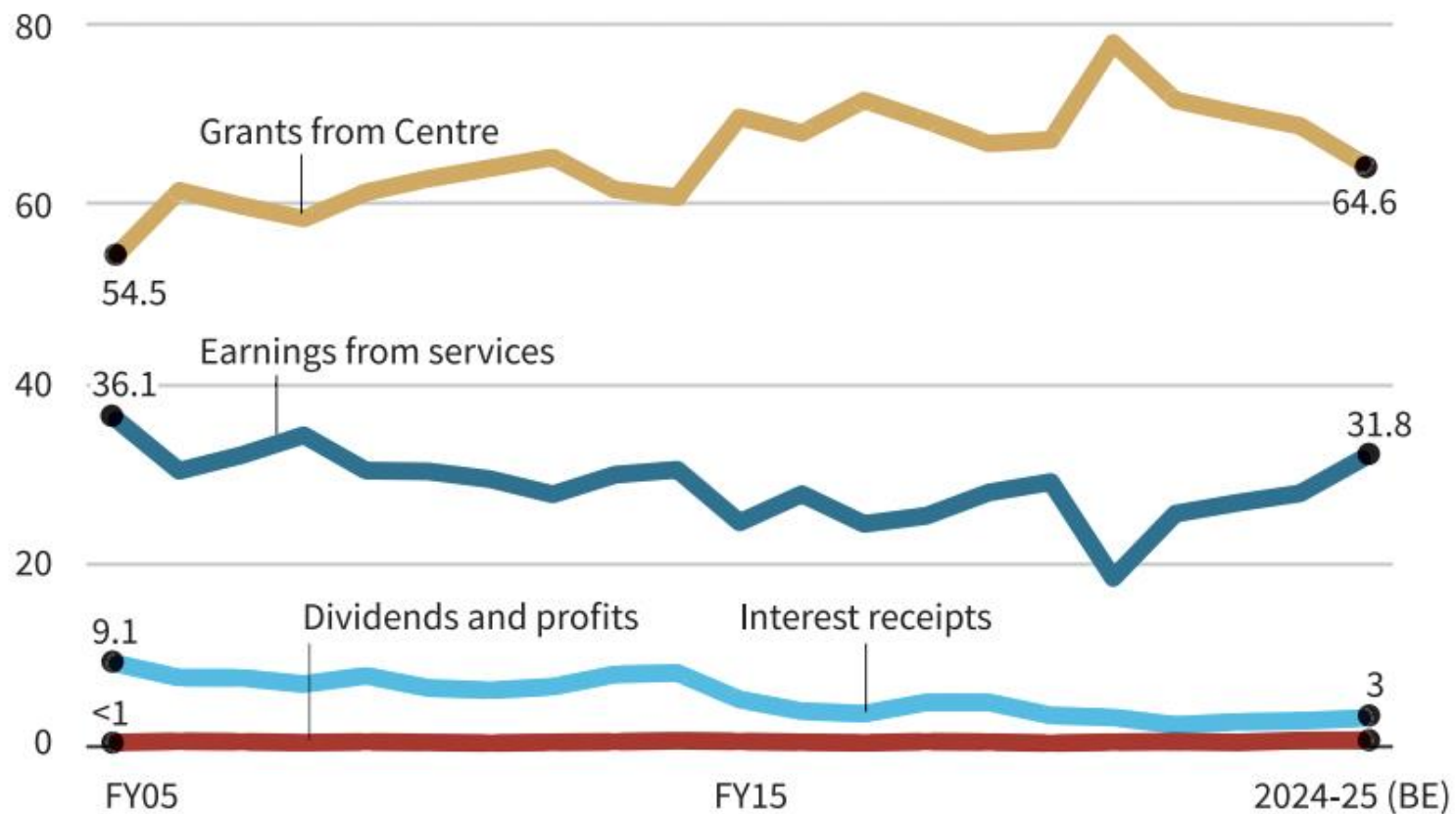


Table 4: Shows the ratio of select States' own tax revenue to their GSDP (in %). FY17, FY21 and FY24 are revised estimates. FY25 is budget estimates

State	FY13-15	FY16-18	FY19-21	FY22- 24
Tamil Nadu	7.72%	6.67%	6.20%	6.17%
Karnataka	7.69%	6.94%	6.27%	6.29%
Bihar	6.04%	6.25%	5.44%	5.75%
Delhi	5.71%	5.26%	4.51%	4.75%
Kerala	7.00%	6.81%	6.28%	6.70%
Madhya Pradesh	7.74%	7.01%	6.01%	6.11%

IN BRIEF



GMR gets ₹6,300 cr. from Abu Dhabi Investment

GMR Group received ₹6,300 crore investment from Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth fund ADIA. The funds will help in reducing the debt of promoter group entity GMR Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. In October last year, the group said it secured ₹6,300 crore in debt funding from the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA). GMR Infra Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. (GIEPL) received the funds towards allotment of optionally convertible debentures on January 7, as per a filing.

ONGC picks BP to boost Mumbai High output

Oil And Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) said it picked BP Exploration (Alpha) Ltd., wholly owned by BP Plc. of U.K., as the technical service provider (TSP) for its Mumbai High (MH) field. The TSP will identify improvements in reservoir, facilities and wells to enhance production from the MH field. ONGC said in a filing. The TSP has indicated a 60% rise in oil and gas production from the baseline production level over a 10-year contract period, ONGC added.

Laxmi Dental sets IPO price band at ₹407-₹428 a share

Laxmi Dental Ltd. will tap the capital market with an initial public offering (IPO) in the price band of ₹407 to ₹428 per equity share of face value of ₹2 each. The central agency company offers dental products like metal-free crowns, bridges and dentures. The issue will open on January 13 and close January 15. At the upper price band, the issue size is estimated at 688 crore. The firm proposes to use net proceeds towards servicing debt, among others.

SEBI pulls up Ola Electric for lapses on disclosures

Restates

India's securities regulator warned Ola Electric against sharing company information on social media before disclosing it to investors, adding to a slew of problems for the electric two-wheeler maker. The letter from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), disclosed by Ola Electric on Tuesday, said the company failed to provide "equal and timely access" to investors of information about a planned store expansion.

In December, Ola Electric founder, Bhavish Anand, shared news about new store openings in a post on social media platform X and to investors at a meeting, before the latter through stock exchanges. Publicly-listed companies are required to disclose any information first to investors through stock exchange filings and not more than 12 hours after the event takes place.

"The above violations have been viewed as seriously, you are hereby warned," SEBI said. Ola Electric, which went public in August 2024, opened 3,200 stores and service centres last month to expand its reach and address increasing number of complaints regarding its service standards. The letter is the latest such regulatory scrutiny of the company following a government agency's investigation into its service standards.

The issues have cast a shadow on Ola's stellar listing, which saw its shares double in value in less than a week. It has also lost market share to rivals TVS Motor and Bajaj Auto's 'Chetak' e-scooters.

Gold googly bamboozles import data

India's overall import bill for the first eight months of 2024-25, reckoned to have grown 8.35% at \$486.73 bn, has been pared by almost 3% to \$472.55 bn, as per DGCIIS data; the dramatic revisions alarm economists and one calls it statistical harakiri

Vikas Dhoot

NEW DELHI

In what may constitute the steepest revision in India's trade data in recent times, the Centre has revised India's import bill for November 2024 by almost \$1 billion dollars to \$63.86 billion from the record tally of \$70 billion reported as quick estimates by the Commerce Ministry last month. It is a sharp \$5 billion downward revision in gold imports.

In fact, India's overall import bill for the first eight months of 2024-25, which was reckoned to have grown 8.35% at

Trade Math Shock

India's gold import bill for Nov. 2024 has been slashed by \$5 billion and cumulative tally from April to November pared by a quarter

Table with 3 columns: Month, Original estimate, Revised estimate. Rows for Gold in Nov. 2024, Gold, April-Nov. 2024, Silver, April-Nov. 2024.

Source: DGCIIS, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

\$486.73 billion, has been pared by almost 3% to \$472.5 billion, as per data uploaded on the website of the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIIS) on

Wednesday and reviewed by The Hindu. The dramatic revisions triggered alarm among economists, with one referring it as outright 'statistical harakiri'. A bulk of this \$14 billion

drop in the year's cumulative goods import tally was linked to a revision in the gold import bill, from \$14 billion for April to November 2024, which marked a 46% spike from a year ago, to just \$37.4 billion which reflected a mere 13.8% rise.

While gold imports accounted for \$1.7 billion of the \$14.2 billion revision in the year's import bill, silver imports accounted for another billion, as they were recalculated to \$2.33 billion from \$3.28 billion estimated as of December 16. The data revision implies India's trade deficit this year should be about \$14 billion lower than esti-

mated earlier. November's trade gap remains the worst on record but at around \$3.8 billion, from the earlier estimate of \$3.784 billion.

October's import bill has also been revised downwards, but by a marginal \$0.16 billion to \$65.18 billion, which means it still marks India's highest import bill in a month.

Ajay Srivastava, director of the Global Trade Research Initiative, said the government must explain the rationale behind the revision to ensure India's economic data retains credibility among investors and financial markets.

Interest rate cuts not a silver bullet to revive the economy: CII chief

Vikas Dhoot

NEW DELHI

There is no single silver bullet such as an interest rate cut that can address the economy's slowdown, and the upcoming Union Budget must revive India's slowing consumption impulses through multiple measures, including a cut in income taxes and fuel duties, and provide a reforms roadmap to bring growth back to the 7% level, India's apex industry body said.

Consumption has been somewhat subdued this year, but the silver bullet soon should boost rural in-

comes and easing food inflation, complemented by limited stressed that the industry is expecting an interest rate cut but it not a silver bullet that can solve the flagging consumption or growth trajectory.

Spur consumption "A rate cut will provide some relief, as far as EMIs are concerned, and that also will help spur consumption and the rest of the rest of 2024-25, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) president Sanjay Puri told

The Hindu. The chairman and managing director of diversified conglomerate TCS Limited stressed that the industry is expecting an interest rate cut but it not a silver bullet that can solve the flagging consumption or growth trajectory.

While the CII chief indicated the need to decouple monetary policy from food inflation that is more related to weather vagaries, he said this needs to be tackled by building resilience in agriculture.

"That is important, because when food inflation becomes sticky... in the middle class, you will find where purchases are taken through a loan. "That will help progressively improve compliance, and with these factors

RBI lifts curbs on Chennai lender Asirvad Micro Finance

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday lifted the supervisory restrictions imposed on Chennai-based Asirvad Micro Finance Ltd., and Delhi-based DMJ Finance Private Ltd. with immediate effect.

On October 17, 2024, the RBI had directed these entities to cease and desist from sanction and disbursement of loans, effective after October 21.

Later, the firms initiated remedial action and submitted compliances to the RBI, the central bank said.

Farm workers, drivers to be fastest growing jobs: WEF

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

Farm workers and drivers will figure among the fastest growing jobs over the next five years, while roles of cashiers and ticket clerks will see the largest decline, a new study showed on Wednesday.

In its Future of Jobs Report 2025, the World Economic Forum (WEF) also said 170 million new jobs will be created by 2030, while 12 million are projected to be displaced, resulting in 78 million net new jobs.

The report, released days before the WEF annual meeting in Davos from January 20-25, said job displacement will equate to 22% of jobs by 2030. Technological advancements, demographic shifts, geo-economic tensions, and economic pressures are the key drivers of shifts in spending industries and labour markets, creating both unprecedented opportunities and profound risks, said IIT Leopolio, head of work, wages and job creation, WEF.

Frontline roles, including farm workers, delivery drivers, and construction workers, are poised to see the largest job growth in absolute terms by 2030. Significant increases are also projected for care jobs, such as nursing professionals and education roles such as secondary school teachers, while demographic shifts, driving growth in demand across essential sectors like care and education are set

panning out, I think, maybe in a couple of quarters we should start seeing some better trends," Mr. Puri said.

While the CII chief indicated the need to decouple monetary policy from food inflation that is more related to weather vagaries, he said this needs to be tackled by building resilience in agriculture.

"That is important, because when food inflation becomes sticky... in the middle class, you will find where purchases are taken through a loan.

"That will help progressively improve compliance, and with these factors

workplaces surprises: Cashiers and ticket clerks face sharpest job cuts in the next five years, the World Economic Forum reckoned.

Proposed levy on steel imports could lead to steep price hike in 2025: Crisil

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

Steel prices in 2025 would be much higher than last year if the proposed safeguard duty on steel imports is imposed by the end of next month, rating agency Crisil said on Wednesday.

"Domestic prices are under pressure due to global steel price decline and are expected to remain soft in 2025. Prices have a 4-6% upside potential hinged on implementation of the safeguard duty.

"Crisil's annual production volume from the newly commissioned capacity, defined 12% in 2024, will reduce flat steel prices, but will still be higher than average price of 2024. That said, intense competition among exporters could limit the upward movement," Vishal Singh, Director-Research at Crisil Market Intelligence and Analytics, said in a statement.

The imposition of a safeguard duty proposed by the industry could be a positive here. Assuming it is implemented by the end of February, steel prices in 2025 would be much higher than 2024, with the impact more prominent in the construction sector, he said in the statement.

Last year, steel prices in the domestic market declined due to additional supply from the metal sector backed by an increase in net imports. Hot-rolled coil (HRC) prices declined 9% and cold rolled coil prices declined 7%, thereby offsetting top-line growth of domestic

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

Table with 2 columns: Index, % Change. Rows for Sensex, Nifty 50, BSE Mid Cap, BSE Small Cap.

NIFTY 50

Table with 3 columns: Index, Price, % Change. Rows for Asian Index, Nikkei 225, Hang Seng, etc.

Table with 3 columns: Index, Price, % Change. Rows for Dow Jones, S&P 500, etc.

Table with 3 columns: Index, Price, % Change. Rows for FTSE 100, DAX, etc.

Table with 3 columns: Index, Price, % Change. Rows for Nikkei 225, Hang Seng, etc.

EXCHANGE RATES

Table with 3 columns: Currency, Rate, % Change. Rows for US Dollar, Euro, etc.

Gold googly bamboozles import data

India's overall import bill for the first eight months of 2024-25, reckoned to have grown 8.35% at \$486.73 bn, has been pared by almost 3% to \$472.5 bn, as per DGCIS data; the dramatic revisions alarm economists and one calls it 'statistical harakiri'

Vikas Dhoot

NEW DELHI

In what may constitute the steepest revision in India's trade data in recent times, the Centre has revised India's import bill for November 2024 by almost six billion dollars to \$63.86 billion from the record tally of \$70 billion reported as quick estimates by the Commerce Ministry last month, led by a sharp \$5 billion downward revision in gold imports.

In fact, India's overall import bill for the first eight months of 2024-25, which was reckoned to have grown 8.35% at

Trade Math Shock

India's gold import bill for Nov. 2024 has been slashed by \$5 billion and cumulative tally from April to November pared by a quarter

Imports (in \$bn)	Original estimate	Revised estimate
Gold in Nov. 2024	14.86	9.9
Gold, April-Nov. 2024	49.1	37.39
Silver, April-Nov. 2024	3.28	2.33



Source: DGCIS, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

\$486.73 billion, has been pared by almost 3% to \$472.5 billion, as per data uploaded on the website of the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) on

Wednesday and reviewed by *The Hindu*. The dramatic revisions triggered alarm among economists, with one terming it as outright 'statistical harakiri'.

A bulk of this \$14 billion

drop in the year's cumulative goods import tally was linked to a revision in the gold import bill from \$49.1 billion for April to November 2024, which marked a 49% spike from a year ago, to just \$37.4 billion which reflects a mere 13.5% rise.

While gold imports accounted for \$11.7 billion of the \$14.2 billion revision in the year's import bill, silver imports accounted for another billion as they were recalibrated to \$2.33 billion from \$3.28 billion estimated as of December 16. The data revision implies India's trade deficit this year should be about \$14 billion lower than esti-

mated earlier. November's trade gap remains the worst on record but at around \$31.8 billion, from the earlier estimate of \$37.84 billion.

October's import bill has also been revised downward, but by a marginal \$0.16 billion to \$66.18 billion, which means it still marks India's highest import bill in a month.

Ajai Srivastava, director of the Global Trade Research Initiative, said the government must explain the rationale behind the revision to ensure India's economic data retains credibility among investors and financial markets.

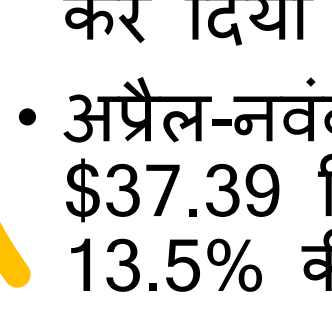


- **Overview**

- The **Centre has revised India's trade data**, significantly slashing the **gold import bill** for November 2024 by **\$5 billion to \$9.9 billion**.
 - This led to a downward revision of the **overall import bill** for the first eight months of FY 2024-25, from **\$486.73 billion to \$472.5 billion**.
 - केंद्र ने नवंबर 2024 के लिए सोने के आयात बिल को **\$5 बिलियन घटाकर \$9.9 बिलियन कर दिया है**, जिससे FY 2024-25 के पहले आठ महीनों के आयात बिल को **\$486.73 बिलियन से घटाकर \$472.5 बिलियन कर दिया गया है**।
- 



- **Revised Trade Data**

- November 2024's import bill revised from **\$70 billion** to **\$63.86 billion**.
 - Gold imports for April-November 2024 revised down from **\$49.1 billion** to **\$37.39 billion**, reflecting a **13.5% rise** instead of a **49% spike**.
 - नवंबर 2024 का आयात बिल \$70 बिलियन से घटाकर \$63.86 बिलियन कर दिया गया।
 - अप्रैल-नवंबर 2024 के लिए सोने के आयात को \$49.1 बिलियन से घटाकर \$37.39 बिलियन किया गया, जो पहले के 49% की वृद्धि की जगह 13.5% की वृद्धि दिखाता है।
- 

Impact on Other Commodities

- **Silver imports** for April-November 2024 revised down from **\$3.28 billion** to **\$2.33 billion**.
- अप्रैल-नवंबर 2024 के लिए चांदी के आयात को \$3.28 बिलियन से घटाकर \$2.33 बिलियन कर दिया गया।

Economic Implications

- India's trade deficit is now estimated to be about **\$14 billion lower** than previous estimates.
- भारत का व्यापार घाटा पहले के अनुमान से लगभग \$14 बिलियन कम रहने की उम्मीद है।
- November's **trade gap** stands at **\$31.8 billion**, down from the earlier estimate of **\$37.84 billion**.
- नवंबर का व्यापार अंतर \$31.8 बिलियन पर है, जो पहले के \$37.84 बिलियन के अनुमान से कम है।

Expert Reactions

Economists' Concerns

- The dramatic revisions have raised alarms, with one economist terming it "statistical harakiri."
- आंकड़ों में बड़े बदलाव ने चिंता बढ़ाई है, एक अर्थशास्त्री ने इसे "सांख्यिकीय हराकिरी" कहा।

Call for Transparency

- Experts demand explanations for such significant revisions to maintain investor confidence.
- विशेषज्ञ निवेशकों के विश्वास को बनाए रखने के लिए इन संशोधनों पर स्पष्टीकरण की मांग कर रहे हैं।

Significance

Impact on Credibility

- Sudden changes in trade data may affect India's **economic credibility** globally.
- व्यापार डेटा में अचानक बदलाव से भारत की वैश्विक **आर्थिक साख** पर असर पड़ सकता है।

Policy Implications

- Highlights the need for accurate data to guide fiscal and trade policies.
- वित्तीय और व्यापार नीतियों को निर्देशित करने के लिए सटीक डेटा की आवश्यकता को रेखांकित करता है।

China expands trade-in plan



More stuff: Microwave ovens and rice cookers will be included in trade-in scheme for home appliances. REUTERS

Reuters

China added more home appliances to the list of products that can be used in its consumer trade-in scheme and will offer subsidies for additional digital goods this year, in an effort to revive demand in the sluggish household sector.

Microwave ovens, water purifiers, dish-washing machines and rice cookers will be included in the trade-in scheme for home appliances this year, according to a document issued by the top state planner and the finance ministry on Wednesday. Cellphones, tablet computers, smart watches and bracelets under 6,000 yuan could get 15% subsidies.

The statement did not specify the total cost of the incentives, however, a finance ministry official said at a press conference on Wednesday that the government had so far allocated \$1 billion yuan (\$11.05 billion) for consumer goods trade-ins to support consumption in 2025.

The new measures are part of a broader plan to spur growth in the world's second-largest economy in 2025, where a severe property crisis has eroded consumer wealth and hurt household spending. China's struggling consumer sector has seen a particular who recessionary economy with analysts calling for urgent measures to get households spending again.

"We expect the total subsidies to double in size to 300 billion yuan in 2025. This marks somewhat a policy pivot towards more consumption," said Xu Tianchen, senior economist at the Economist Intelligence Unit.

China last year apportioned about \$50 billion yuan from the 1 trillion yuan special treasury bonds issuance to subsidize replacements of old appliances, cars and other goods.

Steered by sun



Clean drive: An Aptera electric vehicle, which can run for 40 miles just on integrated solar panels according to the company, is displayed during CES 2025, an annual electronics trade show, in Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S. REUTERS

Markets feeling the most pinch from Trump tariff risks

Reuters

LONDON

From China to Europe, Canada to Mexico, world markets are already reeling from Donald Trump's promise to jack up tariffs when he becomes U.S. president later this month.

Mr. Trump has pledged tariffs of as much as 60% on global imports and 60% on Chinese goods, plus a 25% import surcharge on Canadian and Mexican products, duties that trade experts say would open trade flows, raise costs and draw retaliation.

Here's a look at some markets in focus right now.

1) **Fragile China:** China is likely to be the primary target of the Trump trade wars 2.0, say Goldman Sachs. Investors are

already getting ahead, forcing the country's stock exchange and central bank to defend a tumbling yuan. China's tightly controlled currency is at its weakest in 16 months, with the dollar trading decisively above the symbolic 7.3 yuan milestone which authorities had defended.

Barclays sees the yuan at 7.5 per dollar by end-2025, and sliding to 8.4 in a scenario in which the U.S. imposes 60% tariffs. Analysts expect China to let the yuan weaken further to help exporters manage the impact of tariffs, but gradually.

A sudden plunge would bring lurking fears of capital outflows to the fore, and jolt confidence, already bruised after stocks just saw their biggest weekly

fall in two years.

2) **Collateral damage:** Experts say Trump's tariffs would upend trade flows and draw retaliation. Reuters

around \$1.03. JP Morgan and Rabobank reckon the single currency could fall to the key \$1 mark this year as tariff uncertainty weighs.

The U.S. is the European Union's most important trading partner, with \$1.7 trillion in two-way goods and services trade. Markets anticipate 100

Trump's SEC pick likely to give Wall Street easier enforcement ride

Under Paul Atkins, the SEC will likely focus on misconduct that causes direct investor losses rather than corporate malfeasance where the harm is not always immediately obvious, critics say such an approach is dangerous since big companies can pose systemic risks and cause large-scale harm

NEWS ANALYSIS

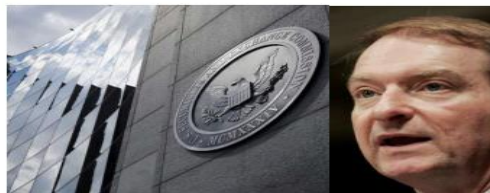
Reuters

President-elect Donald Trump's SEC pick voted several times against punishing big companies and was extremely critical of the agency's enforcement process when he was a top official there, according to public records and former SEC attorneys, in a possible glimpse of what is to come under his leadership.

Paul Atkins voted against at least 10 enforcement actions punishing individuals and companies, including Citigroup and IBM, according to a Reuters review of Securities and Exchange Commission records from the final years of his 2002-2008 stint as a commissioner. In doing so, he defied his fellow Republican agency chairs.

Mr. Atkins was also fastidious, scrutinizing proposed enforcement actions word by word and frequently pushing back on SEC cases that could be affected by new leadership.

High-profile companies whose SEC cases could be affected by new leadership include electric carmaker Tesla, crypto exchanges Coinbase Global and Binance, and investment firms BlackRock, Carlyle and TPG.



New approach: A general exterior view of the U.S. SEC headquarters in Washington. Atkins (right) believes fines unfairly penalise shareholders who are already affected. REUTERS

focus on individual fraudsters. He became well-known for his industry-friendly views, even as the agency grappled with the fallout from the Enron and WorldCom accounting scandals.

But his enforcement dissenters suggest that Wall Street is set for a much easier ride after years of aggressive enforcement under Democratic Chair Gary Gensler, whose SEC levied over \$20 billion in penalties and other charges.

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His nomination should bring down the stress levels and ambient heart rates for compliance ... staffers

TYLER GELLASCH
Former SEC official

Under Mr. Atkins, the SEC will likely focus on misconduct that causes direct investor losses, such as scams, rather than corporate malfeasance where the harm is not always immediately obvious, the sources said. Critics say such an approach is dangerous because big companies can pose systemic risks and cause large-scale harm to investors.

Airbus faces financial bill after end-year delivery crunch

Reuters

PARIS

Airbus is counting the cost of last-minute financial concessions to airlines to overcome a spate of minor quality problems after scrambling to deliver a provisional 123 jets in December, industry sources said.

The end-year push brings preliminary 2024 deliveries to 766 jets, up 4% from 2023, but this is subject to internal audits, meaning it could still be trimmed by one or two jets before final data is released on Thursday, sources said.

Even so, the world's largest plane maker is expected to declare victory after putting a floor of 750 on its guidance of "around 770" deliveries in a briefing to analysts in October.

Airbus has been under pressure to meet targets and deliver on promises to investors after a profit warning in July. But unions and some airlines have



Concession logic: Concessions are a pragmatic way to help keep deliveries moving and reassure airlines. REUTERS

wakened Chinese economy also hurts Europe. Tariffs hitting China and the EU at the same time could be a "very toxic mix for the euro", ING currency strategist Francesco Pesole.

3) **Car trouble:** In Europe, auto stocks are also particularly sensitive to tariff headlines.

On Monday, a basket of auto names briefly shot up almost 5% on a Washington Post report that Trump aides are exploring import duties only for critical im-

port the agency publicized the outcomes of enforcement votes, obscuring commissioner's overall records from public view.

Reuters reviewed online voting records from Atkins' tenure, for which only 28 months during 2006 to 2008 are available. The records relate to administrative enforcement actions brought before the SEC's in-house court but not federal court litigation.

With 10 dissents, Mr. Atkins disapproved of more than twice as many actions as Democratic commissioner Roel Campos, while Democrat Annette Nazareth and Mr. Atkins' fellow Republican Kathleen Casey did not dissent on enforcement matters at all during those months.

Even in today's partisan climate where party-line SEC dissents are common, Mr. Atkins' willingness to oppose his fellow Republicans on enforcement matters is striking, underscoring how strongly he felt about the issues, said experts.

"Atkins is an independent thinker with a clear view about how markets work," said Stanford professor Joseph Grundfest, who was a Democratic commissioner in the 1990s.

Jay Clayton, SEC chair during Mr. Trump's first term, was similarly skeptical of big corporate fines and focused mostly on small-scale investor fraud. But the agency was

still active, notching record penalties in 2020 and surprising some onlookers with landmark charges against Tesla and crypto firm Ripple.

Exactness approach: While Mr. Atkins' 10 dissents were among thousands of votes he would have made, former agency officials said they accurately reflect his exacting approach to issues.

Mr. Atkins voted against a \$7-million SEC settlement with IBM over accounting and other issues, and opposed a 2008 order against Citigroup over its financial statements. He also dissented on smaller matters, such as censuring unregistered accountants.

The documents do not record Mr. Atkins' reasoning but, in contemporaneous remarks, he argued that corporate fines only hurt shareholders who had already suffered from the original misconduct.

He also argued that enforcers often pursued minor infractions, suggesting in a 2008 speech that they did so to pad enforcement figures, and that enforcers were not transparent about the evidence they had on target.

"Where there are serious violations, enforcement action is necessary, but the goal should be to work with firms to build their internal compliance," Mr. Atkins said.

They said Airbus had been forced to make financial pledges or offer other commercial incentives to get several December deliveries over the line. There are no suggestions that any glitches involved in end-year delivery negotiations have safety implications.

The logic behind the practice of concessions is to take a pragmatic view on minor niggles to keep deliveries moving and reassure airlines. For example, if a panel has to be replaced, Airbus might gain a concession that repairs would not be any costlier than usual. Critics say that overuse can destroy value and affect credibility with airline buyers.

5) **Volatile peso:** The Mexican peso was already down 16% against the dollar in 2024 when Mr. Trump was elected, so a lot of news—both good for the dollar and bad for the peso—was priced in.

Monday's tariff news, later denied by Mr. Trump, sent the peso up as much as 2% before it pared gains, highlighting that volatility may continue as trade along the U.S. southern border remains a target for the President-elect.

6) **Challenging Canada:** A full-fledged trade war necessitating additional Canadian rate cuts could push the loonie to the 1.50 mark against the U.S. dollar, said ING's Pesole. That would imply a further weakening of almost 5%.

7) **China's impact:** The Chinese yuan was already down 16% against the dollar in 2024 when Mr. Trump was elected, so a lot of news—both good for the dollar and bad for the peso—was priced in.

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Steered by sun



Clean drive: An Apera electric vehicle, which can run for 40 miles just on integrated solar panels according to the company, is displayed during CES 2025, an annual consumer electronics trade show, in Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S. REUTERS

IN THE NEWS

Sebi warns Ola over disclosure norms violations

SEBI HAS ISSUED AN administrative warning letter to Ola Electric. Mobility over violations of disclosure norms, reports **Sebi Bureau**. The warning pertains to the company sharing its expansion plans on the social media before informing investors through exchange filings. ■ PAGE 6

Puri says higher corp efficiency also behind lower wage growth

THE TREND OF manufacturing companies outsourcing services has impacted wage growth in India, **Sanjiv Puri**, president of CII, said in an interview with **Priyansh Verma** and **Raghav Aggarwal**. ■ PAGE 2

Cheese, ready-to-eat meals, snacks next on Wilmar menu

SINGAPORE-BASED WILMAR INTERNATIONAL is likely to bolster the food portfolio of Adani Wilmar by introducing items like cheese, ready-to-eat meals and snacks after the exit of the Indian partner, reports **Wineet Susan Pinto**. ■ PAGE 4

NBFC fundraising through ECB route hits 5-year high

FUNDRAISING BY NON-BANKING financial companies through the external commercial borrowings route has hit a five-year high of ₹5,04 lakh crore in 2024, reports **Anupreksha Jain**. ■ PAGE 4

RBI lifts restrictions on DMI Finance and Asirvad Micro Fin

THE RESERVE BANK OF India on Wednesday lifted supervisory restrictions on Asirvad Micro Finance and DMI Finance, reports **Sebi Bureau**. Restrictions were imposed on these NBFCs in October 2024. ■ PAGE 4

BP wins bid to operate ONGC's Mumbai High field

BP HAS BEEN selected as the technical service provider for enhancement of ONGC's Mumbai High field providing up to 60% increase in output over baseline levels, reports **Anurima Bharadwaj**. ■ PAGE 2

FE SPECIALS

'Align AI and business goals for better results'

Interview with **Shalender Kumar**, SVP and regional MD, Oracle India
 ■ **EFPI** P9

How front-running distorts markets

Sebi took up 83 cases of front-running for investigation in 2023-24.
 ■ **EXPLAINER** P9

GUARDED APPROACH LIKELY TO IMPENDING TRUMP'S MOVES

No pre-emptive tariff overhaul

● Routine customs duty rejig likely

MUKESH JAGOTA, New Delhi, January 8

THE GOVERNMENT has decided to bide time and take a reactive — rather than pre-emptive — approach to the impending tariff threat from the incoming Donald Trump administration in the US, according to official sources. It is unlikely that the FY26 Budget, to be presented in Parliament on February 1, would undertake any anticipatory customs duty restructuring to bring down the tariff levels in response to Trump's charges of India being a "high tariff" nation, these sources said.

At best, routine duty adjustments, including those aimed at their correction of the "inverted duty structure" that has been in place since the inauguration of President Trump, will be carried out, a senior government functionary said that it remained to be seen what he actually intends to do, and by when. He could go the whole hog and announce after and before, or might adopt a staggered approach, the sources added, noting that there wasn't any need for the country to take any pre-emptive measure, or hurry in this regard. The US president-elect has on multiple occasions called India a major tariff abuser, and threatened the country with retaliatory moves. Later, he reiterated that his tariff



policy would not be pared back, conveying a 'broad-based' technology development and guard against the potential of AI to hurt employment, he sources added. In the run-up to the Budget, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office wants in the tech world, including Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Vivaldi Systems, Inc founder Vishal Sikka and Perplexity AI CEO Aravind Srinivas to discuss opportunities and human-centric approach to AI.

AI policy to get a shot in the arm

TECH PUSH

25-35% growth in AI market seen by 2027

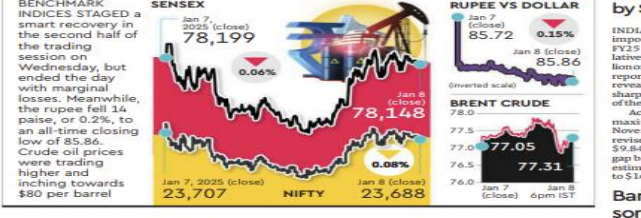
1.25 million potential demand for Indian AI talent in 2027, from 600,000-650,000 now

- Likely measures**
- Facilitation of AI centres
 - Special schemes for skilling
 - Priority to 'human-centric' tech development
 - Deployment without affecting employment

RUN-UP TO THE BUDGET 2025-26

THE 2025-26 BUDGET is likely to announce a set of policies to support the artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem in the country, besides laying a road map for making the country an AI hub. The set of measures, according to sources, may include facilitation of AI centres, and special schemes for skilling, to make the best use of the technology, which is transforming not only business processes, but also production and

Markets recover from day's low



Foxconn, Dixon urge govt to pay ₹700 cr in pending PLI subsidies

SANKALP BHARTIYAL, January 8

APPLE SUPPLIER FOXCONN Technology Group and Dixon Technology India are asking the government to pay them crore in subsidies they think they are entitled to under the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme. The jobs oriented, public-private partnership (PPP) scheme has a total of ₹41,000 crore in subsidies to manufacturers, and part of that remains unallocated because some

companies didn't meet estimated production targets. Foxconn and Dixon argue that, according to the scheme rules, they are eligible for some of the unallocated funds, people here said with the matter source. Foxconn could get as much as ₹700 crore and Dixon ₹300 crore if the government releases the funds, the jobs oriented, public-private partnership (PPP) scheme has a total of ₹41,000 crore in subsidies to manufacturers, and part of that remains unallocated because some

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TARGETS MET

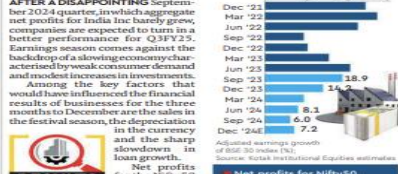
- Foxconn's subsidy set as much as ₹700 cr and Dixon ₹300 cr
- Dixon's production of 88,000 cr in FY24 surpassed its cap of 86,000 cr
- AT ₹30,000 crore of iPhone production in FY23, Foxconn exceeded its ₹20,000 cr target

Modest Q3 on the cards for India Inc

FE BUREAU, New Delhi, January 8

AFTER A DISAPPOINTING September 2024 quarter, in which aggregate net profits for India Inc barely grew, companies are expected to turn in a better performance for Q3 FY25. Earnings season comes against the backdrop of a slowing economy characterised by weak consumer demand and a decrease in investments. Among the key factors that would have influenced the financial results of businesses for the three months to December are the sales in the festival season, the depreciation in the currency and the sharp slowdown in loan growth.

Net profits for the 50 companies are tipped to grow at the back of a 4.3% rise in revenues, according to Kotak Institutional Equities (KIE). For the BSE 30 set of companies, net profits are estimated to grow by 7.2% y-o-y on the back of a rise in sales of 5.7% y-o-y. Operating profits for both sets of companies are expected to grow slower than the net profits, suggesting that the bottom line would be boosted by other income. The sectors that are expected to report only a single-digit net profit growth or a fall in profits include auto, telecom, bank, cement, consumer staples and metals. The sectors that are expected to fare relatively well, posting high double-digit earnings increases, are capital goods, pharmaceuticals, real estate telecom and non-banking financial companies. The muted consumer demand, especially in urban India, is understood to have left volume growth at FMCG players subdued.



Continued on Page 14

April-November gold imports overstated by \$11.7 bn: Govt

INDIA OVER-COUNTED ITS gold imports for every single month of FY25 up to November with a cumulative over-reporting of \$11.7 billion or 31% in the first eight months, reports **Mukesh Jagota**. This was revealed in a review triggered by a sharp, inexplicable spike in imports of yellow metal in November.

According to the revised data, the main over-reporting was for November, with the figure being revised downward by \$5 billion to \$4.8 billion. For other months, the gap between the initial and revised estimates range from \$1.4 billion to \$1.6 million. ■ PAGE 2

Ban on trade in some crop futures may be lifted

THE CENTRE IS considering revoking a three-year ban on futures trading in seven farm commodities, including wheat and unprocessed rice, after studies found the steps were counter-productive, according to a person with knowledge of the matter, reports **Bhaskar**.

A government panel recommended ending the ban, after the findings showed that curbs imposed in 2021 to tame costs had instead disrupted the market. The panel's decision will be taken by a group of ministers, including the agriculture regulator Sebi to lift the curbs or extend them beyond the existing January 31 deadline. ■ PAGE 2

Continued on Page 14

Swiggy serves Snacc to take on Zomato in 15-minute delivery

RAGHAV AGGARWAL, New Delhi, January 8

FOOD AND GROCERY delivery platform Swiggy has launched a new initiative — Snacc — in the competitive quick food delivery space. With over-reporting of \$11.7 billion or 31% in the first eight months, reports **Mukesh Jagota**. This was revealed in a review triggered by a sharp, inexplicable spike in imports of yellow metal in November.

Snacc stands apart from Swiggy's other offerings by operating from centralised hubs stocked with pre-prepared items. This distinguishes it from other delivery

Continued on Page 14

'The plan is profitability first, followed by IPO'

● **GAURAV MUNJAL**, CO-FOUNDER & CEO, UNACADEMY

With an eye on profitability, edtech firm Unacademy is charting a steady path forward as it competes with industry heavyweight in a rapidly evolving market. Co-founder & CEO Gaurav Munjal, in interview with **Animesh Hansala**, discusses the firm's strategy on offline learning and plans for sustainable growth. Excerpts:

In the past, you've been vocal about staying online-only. But today, Unacademy is embracing offline. What has changed?

When we launched in 2015, offline wasn't even on our radar. But as we listened to our customers, especially Class 11 and 12 students, it became clear that some preferred offline learning. By 2024, offline contributed 40% of our revenue, so it's now a major part of our strategy. Initially, there was resistance, but we adapted, and now we're very bullish on it.

How has the online learning business performed in the meantime?

Our goal with online was profitability, which meant making tough choices. We shut down certain categories like SSC and CA and CAT. This led to a 20% decrease in 2024, but we're expecting some growth in 2025. The priority for online remains staying close to profitability and we're on track.

Two years ago, we were burning ₹1,400 cr annually. That's been reduced to ₹500 cr. And we expect to bring it below ₹100 cr in 2025. By 2026, we should be profitable.

Isn't the offline push a capex-heavy initiative for a traditionally online company like Unacademy?

Not really. Clients like Allen, Narayana and Physics Wallah in the offline space? Not really. Our revenue from the offline business is currently around ₹350 cr, but our long-term goal is to grow 10x. We aim to position ourselves as a premium service that delivers results. The differentiators will be operational efficiency and discipline because offline is fundamentally a utilisation business — slow growth, consistent delivery and efficiency are the only ways to win.

Are all your offline centres company-owned or are you exploring franchise models?

We operate 33 company-owned centres and 10 franchisees. Franchising offers better margins, but the experience is more consistent with company-owned centres. Franchisees make sense in smaller cities, like Bikaner, where we wouldn't otherwise operate.

Continued on Page 14

Make America 'Greater' Again?

Why Trump's Eyeing Canada, Greenland

He's yet to be sworn in for his second stint, but Donald Trump is already kicking up controversy. He has floated the idea of what could be a 'Greater America' by asking Canada to join his country as its 51st state and revived talk of acquiring Greenland

US + Canada Will Be **A Big Deal** For Sure



19.5 mn sqkm

Combined size of Canada and US. It'll topple

Russia (17mn sqkm) from its perch of the world's largest country



\$53.5 billion

US goods and services trade deficit with Canada in 2022

GDP: \$25.4tn



\$2.1tn



\$27.6 trillion

Combined GDP of US and Canada. It'll put the entity about \$10tn clear of

China (\$17.9tn), the second-largest economy



“ Many people in Canada LOVE being the 51st State. The United States can no longer suffer the massive Trade Deficits and Subsidies that Canada needs to stay afloat. Justin Trudeau knew this, and resigned



— **Donald Trump** (hours after Trudeau announced he will step down)

Greenland Will Bring Shipping, Mineral Heft

40% Distance shaved off the western Europe-east Asia route if ships were to go through the Arctic Sea instead of Suez Canal, the circuit that's currently preferred because Arctic waters tend to stay ice-bound for the better part of the year.



➤ However, global warming is thawing down the Arctic route and the forecast is for the traffic through the area to dramatically increase, especially as newer routes open up, like the North-West Passage (see map). It'll allow ships to avoid the Russian-controlled Northern Sea Route.

➤ **25/34** of critical raw materials Europe needs for its industries and the green transition can be found in Greenland. In 2023, EU signed an MoU with Greenland to develop sustainable raw materials value chains.

➤ Warming temperatures are making mining easier in Greenland, which has large deposits of rare earth metals key to the production of energy transition tech and batteries.

“
For purposes of National Security and Freedom throughout the World, the United States of America feels that the ownership and control of Greenland is an absolute necessity
— Trump

Acquiring Lands Not Outlandish Idea

White settlers, of course, displaced American Indians as they captured and came to control the North American landmass but, through its history, US has employed many devices to expand its territory, from conquest to outright purchase. **Here's a selective list:**

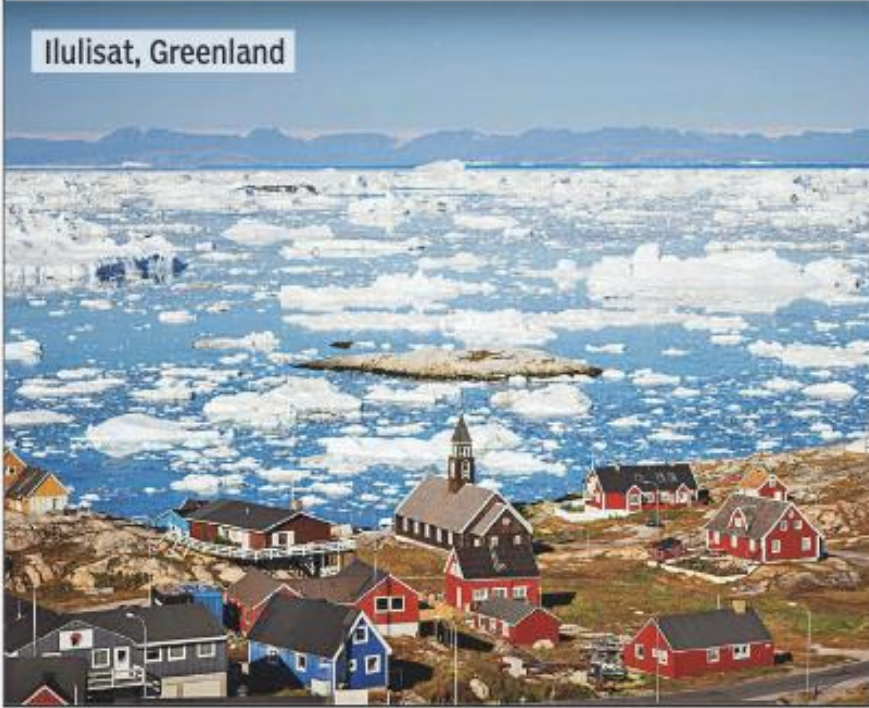
Territory	Area (sq.km)	Acquired In	Method
Louisiana	2.1mn	1803	Purchased from France for \$15mn
Florida	1,86,740	1819	Purchased from Spain for \$5mn
Alaska	1.5mn	1867	Purchased from Russia for \$7.2mn
Puerto Rico	9,085	1898	Annexed following military victory over Spain
Virgin Islands	352	1917	Purchased from Denmark for \$25mn

➤ To bring foreign territories under its sway, US could draw up a Compact of Free Association (COFA) – which allows a foreign country to maintain a high degree of economic integration with the US while remaining politically independent. US has COFAs with three Pacific Island states –

Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau.

➤ Since the 19th century, US has come to control 16 'insular areas', jurisdictions associated with it that are nonetheless not part of the country. The most recent – Northern Mariana Islands – was added in 1986.

Ilulissat, Greenland



Greenland Could Soon Be **Independent**

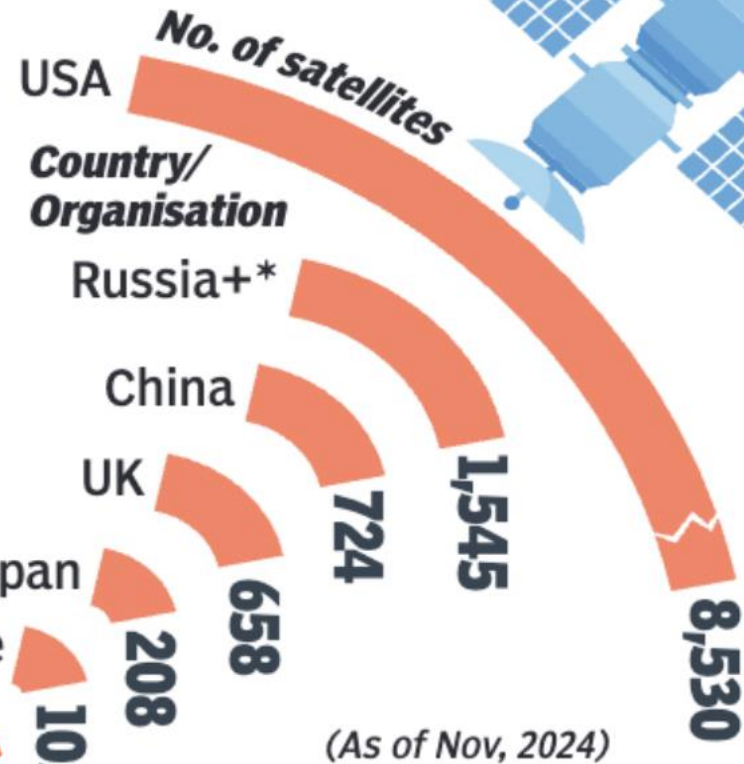
Greenland is an autonomous territory of Denmark and the island of 55,000 people is heavily dependent on the Scandinavian country for its economy, defence and foreign policy. But there is an ongoing movement in Greenland for complete independence. The next Greenlandic parliamentary election is scheduled for 2025 and could signal which way the independence movement goes.

- “ Greenland is ours. We are not for sale and will never be for sale. We must not lose our long struggle for freedom — **Greenland PM Mute Egede**
- “ There isn't a snowball's chance in hell that Canada would become part of the United States — **Canadian PM Justin Trudeau**, on X

Source: USTR, World Bank, Arctic Institute, media reports

India's satellite constellation is the 7th largest

US has nearly 80 times more satellites in orbit than India, which is No.7 on the list of countries and organisations with satellites in space



Russia+**: Russia and former Soviet republics; *ESA**: European Space Agency; Source: Statista, 2024; Design: Anil Panwar

Section 479 of BNSS, 2023

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has issued directives to all states and Union Territories (UTs) for implementing Section 479 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) 2023.

About Section 479 of BNSS, 2023:

Purpose: Provides relief to undertrial prisoners by mandating their release on bail or bond under certain conditions.

Key Provisions:

- **Subsection (1):**
 - Under trial prisoners (UTPs) who have served **half the maximum sentence** prescribed for the offense (except those punishable by death or life imprisonment) shall be released on bail.
 - For **first-time offenders**, UTPs serving **one-third of the maximum sentence** are eligible for release on bond.

Subsection (3):

- Makes it mandatory for prison superintendents to file applications in the concerned court for the release of eligible prisoners.

Superintendent of Jail Responsibility:

- Ensure timely application for bail or bond to the court for eligible prisoners.

Burkina Faso



- **Location:**

- Situated in West Africa, Burkina Faso is landlocked.
- **Borders:** Mali (northwest), Niger (northeast), Benin (southeast), Togo and Ghana (south), and Ivory Coast (southwest).

- **Capital:** Ouagadougou.

- **Geographic Features:**

- **Rivers:** Major rivers include the Mouhoun (Black Volta), Nakambe (White Volta), and the Nazinon (Red Volta).
- **Deserts:** The northern region is arid and forms part of the Sahel, with semi-desert landscapes.

- **Historical Highlights:**

- Formerly named **Upper Volta** under French colonial rule.
- Renamed **Burkina Faso** in 1984 by President Thomas Sankara.

- **Languages and Ethnicities:**

- **Languages:** French (official), with indigenous languages like Moore widely spoken.
- **Ethnic Groups:** The Mossi are the largest ethnic group.

- What is the purpose of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023?

डिजिटल व्यक्तिगत डेटा संरक्षण अधिनियम, 2023 का उद्देश्य क्या है?

- **A. Protect personal data and ensure user privacy / व्यक्तिगत डेटा की सुरक्षा और उपयोगकर्ता गोपनीयता सुनिश्चित करना**
- **B. Promote data sharing across organizations / संगठनों के बीच डेटा साझा करना बढ़ावा देना**
- **C. Strengthen financial regulations / वित्तीय नियमों को मजबूत करना**
- **D. Encourage cryptocurrency transactions / क्रिप्टोक्यूरेंसी लेनदेन को प्रोत्साहित करना**

- Where will the Flamingo Festival 2025 be held?
फ्लेमिंगो फेस्टिवल 2025 कहाँ आयोजित होगा?
- **A. Pulicat Lake, Andhra Pradesh / पुलिकट झील, आंध्र प्रदेश**
- **B. Chilika Lake, Odisha / चिलिका झील, ओडिशा**
- **C. Sullurpeta, Andhra Pradesh / सुलुरुपेटा, आंध्र प्रदेश**
- **D. Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan / केवलादेव राष्ट्रीय उद्यान, राजस्थान**

- What is the main feature of the AnemiaPhone technology adopted by ICMR?
आईसीएमआर द्वारा अपनाई गई एनीमियाफोन तकनीक की मुख्य विशेषता क्या है?
- **A. Detects anemia using a drop of blood / एक रक्त की बूंद से एनीमिया का पता लगाता है**
- B. Monitors blood pressure / रक्तचाप की निगरानी करता है**
- C. Measures cholesterol levels / कोलेस्ट्रॉल स्तर को मापता है**
- D. Provides glucose level tracking / ग्लूकोज स्तर की निगरानी करता है**

- Which country recently revised its trade data to reflect a lower gold import bill?

किस देश ने हाल ही में अपने सोने के आयात बिल को कम करके व्यापार डेटा को संशोधित किया है?

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

- What is the main cause of anemia in India?
भारत में एनीमिया का मुख्य कारण क्या है?
- **A. Iron deficiency / आयरन की कमी**
- B. Genetic disorders / आनुवंशिक विकार**
- C. Malnutrition / कुपोषण**
- D. Parasitic infections / परजीवी संक्रमण**

- What percentage of pregnant women in India are affected by iron deficiency anemia?
भारत में कितने प्रतिशत गर्भवती महिलाएं आयरन की कमी से होने वाले एनीमिया से प्रभावित हैं?
- **A. 30-40%**
- **B. 50-70%**
- **C. 80-90%**
- **D. Above 90% / 90% से अधिक**

- What is the Pulicat Lake ecosystem known for?
पुलिकट झील पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र के लिए क्या प्रसिद्ध है?
- **A. Migratory bird habitat / प्रवासी पक्षियों का आवास**
- **B. Largest coral reefs in India / भारत के सबसे बड़े कोरल रीफ्स**
- **C. Deep-sea biodiversity / गहरे समुद्र की जैव विविधता**
- **D. Dense mangrove forests / सघन मैंग्रोव वन**

- Which technology supports real-time anemia diagnosis using mobile devices?

कौन सी तकनीक मोबाइल उपकरणों का उपयोग करके वास्तविक समय में एनीमिया निदान का समर्थन करती है?

- **A. AnemiaPhone / एनीमियाफोन**
- B. GlucoTrack / ग्लूकोट्रैक**
- C. HealthBot / हेल्थबॉट**
- D. BioScan / बायोस्कैन**

- How often is the Flamingo Festival held in Andhra Pradesh?
आंध्र प्रदेश में फ्लेमिंगो फेस्टिवल कितनी बार आयोजित होता है?
- **A. Annually / हर साल**
- B. Biennially / हर दो साल में**
- C. Every five years / हर पांच साल में**
- D. Monthly / हर महीने**

- What was Burkina Faso previously known as during French colonial rule?
फ्रेंच औपनिवेशिक शासन के दौरान बुर्किना फासो को पहले किस नाम से जाना जाता था?
- **A. Upper Volta / अपर वोल्टा**
- **B. Ivory Coast / आइवरी कोस्ट**
- **C. Gold Coast / गोल्ड कोस्ट**
- **D. Mali Federation / माली फेडरेशन**

Word of the day

Gelid:

extremely cold

Synonyms: arctic, frigid, glacial, icy, polar

Usage: *She could not long survive the gelid waters of the lake.*

Pronunciation: [newsth.live/gelidpro](https://www.newsth.live/gelidpro)

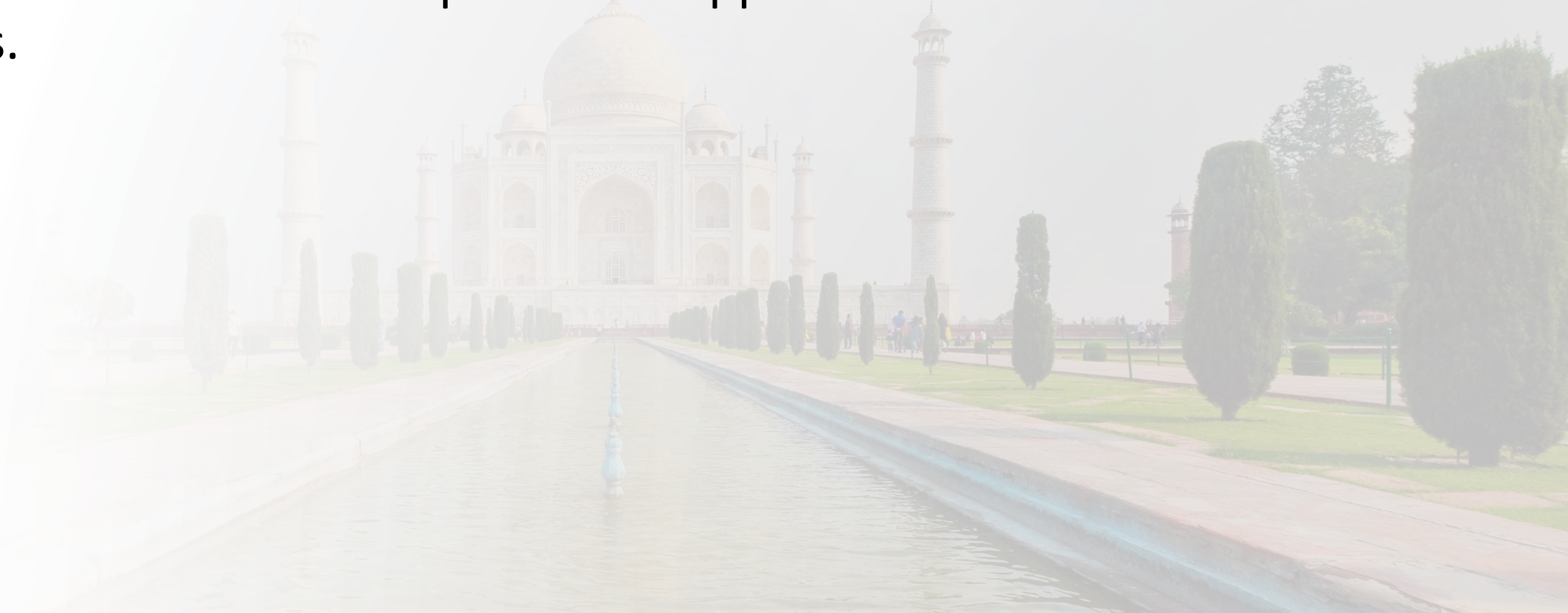
International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈdʒɛl.ɪd/



Fun Fact

Myth : Ancient Indians believed in a flat Earth.

- Ancient Indian texts like the **Rigveda** and works by **Aryabhata** describe the Earth as a sphere. Aryabhata even explained the Earth's rotation and its relationship with the apparent motion of celestial objects.



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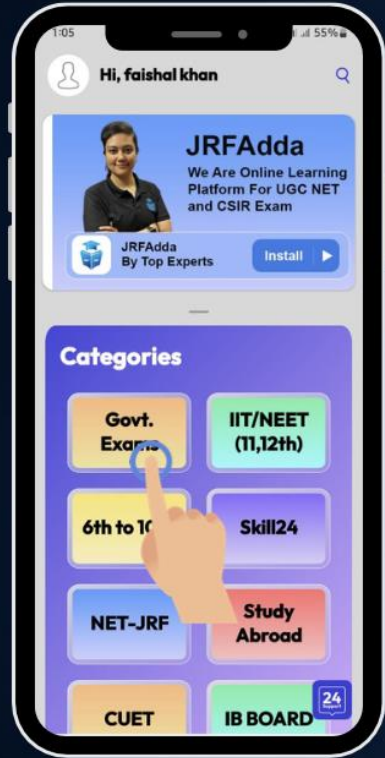
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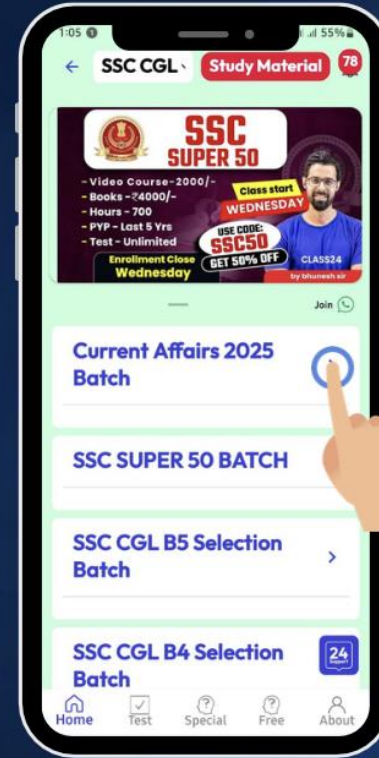
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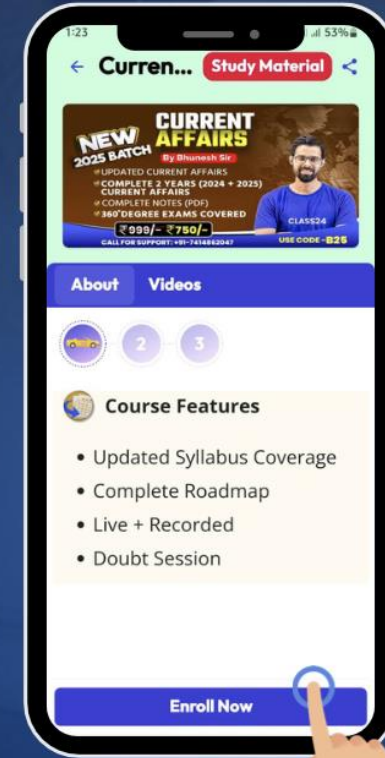
Step 2




Step 3



Step 4





Thank you
guys.
