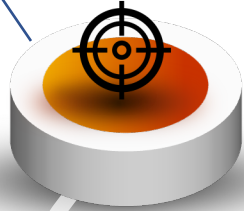


Daily Current Affairs



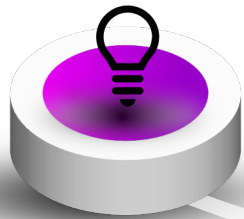


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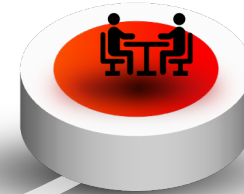


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"If your voice is high, only a few people will hear. If your thought is high, then many people will listen."

~ Invajy





CYBERCRIME RACKET IN NUH
28,000 people duped of ₹100 crore: police
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Patient kills house surgeon
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ISHAM'S ARREST
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INDIAN SPACE POLICY 2023
It is a forward looking document
But it needs suitable legislation to back it
EDITORIAL » PAGE 8



SUPER KINGS' DAY OUT
Dhoni's men too good for Warner's Capitals
SPORT » PAGE 17

IN BRIEF



Modi, Gehlot trade barbs in Rajasthan

Modi, Gehlot trade barbs in Rajasthan
JAIPUR Prime Narendra Modi and Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot traded barbs on Wednesday, with the former stating that infrastructure development was not prioritised after independence and Mr. Gehlot reminding him that the nation was not built in a day. » Page 4

SC set to rule on Sena vs Sena battle today

MUMBAI The Supreme Court will deliver its verdict on Thursday on a batch of petitions filed by rival Shiv Sena groups following the political crisis in Maharashtra last year. It is expected to decide the fate of the Eknath Shinde government. » Page 13

Karnataka records 72.68% turnout in Assembly polls

After a fierce campaign by BJP, Congress and JD(S), polling percentage crosses the 2018 figure; Bengaluru records a low turnout of 54.51%; counting of votes for 224-member House on May 13

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Assembly election held on Wednesday passed off peacefully with a turnout of 72.68% as per provisional data at 11 p.m., surpassing the 72.36% recorded in 2018.

Predictably, Bengaluru's turnout in the 28 constituencies that come under it remained dismal at an estimated 54.51%, despite a campaign blitz by several national leaders of all parties, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and special drives by the Election Commission to entice these urban voters.

In stark contrast to Bengaluru, its neighbouring districts with large rural pockets recorded a heavy turnout. Chikkaballapura recorded a turnout of

Poll predictions

Exit polls, barring News Nation-CGS, predict Congress to be the single-largest party in the 224-member Karnataka Assembly, though there is also a likelihood of a hung House.

Exit polls	BJP	Congress	JD(S)	Others
Zee News-4Mitra	75-24	103-2-18	22-23	2-5
Today's Channarayana	92-8-11	120-4-11	12-7	0-3
ABP News-Voter	83-6-5	105-1-12	21-29	2-6
Times Now-ETG	85	113	23	3
Republic P-MARO	85-100	94-108	23-31	2-6
Aaj Tak Axis	62-40	122-140	20-25	0-3
India TV-CNN	80-90	110-120	20-24	1-3
TV 9-Bharatwarsa-Polizat	88-98	99-109	21-26	0-1
News Nation-CGS	114	86	21	3



Voting day: People queuing up to cast their vote at a primary school in the Mangaluru City South constituency on Wednesday. H.S. MANJUNATH

85.83%, followed by Ramnagara at 84.98%, Bengaluru Rural at 83.76% and Tumakuru at 83.49%.

After Bengaluru, Kalaburagi at 65.22%, Yadgiri at 66.66% and Raichur at 69.79% recorded a relatively lower turnout.

Polling for the 224 Assembly seats began on a slow note in the morning with about 8.21% of the votes polled in the first two hours. It gathered pace later in the day.

The State had witnessed a fierce campaign by the ruling BJP, the Congress and the Janata Dal(S). The counting of votes will be held on Saturday.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12
RELATED REPORTS
» PAGE 6

Higher pension: EPFO offices told to work out dues of subscribers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has issued an internal circular directing its regional offices on the method to calculate the dues of subscribers who apply for higher Provident Fund (PF) pension.

According to the circular, 8.33% of employer share on higher pay from November 16, 1995 or from the date the pay exceeds the wage ceiling of ₹6,500 and 1.16% of employer share on higher pay above ₹15,000 a month will be added for calculating dues. Employees who opt for higher pension will have to pay this amount from their PF contribution. Pensioners too will have to make the payment.

"The interest to be charged on dues as calculated above shall be the interest earned by the members on their PF



A circular will be issued for the public with the method of calculating dues and pension.

accumulations," the circular said. Another circular on calculating the pension will be released soon.

An EPFO official said a separate circular would be issued addressing the public with details of the method of calculating dues and pension.

The step is part of a series of measures taken by the EPFO to implement the Supreme Court order on higher PF pension.

Biden to host state dinner for Modi on June 22

Sriram Lakshman
NEW DELHI

The White House has announced the state visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington DC next month. "President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden will host Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the Republic of India for an Official State Visit to the United States, which will include a state dinner, on June 22, 2023," the announcement said, adding that the visit will "affirm the deep and close partnership" between the two countries and their people-to-people ties.

New Delhi confirmed the visit, saying it would underscore the "growing importance" of the bilateral relationship. This would be the first state visit of an Indian leader after then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's trip in 2009.

RELATED REPORT
» PAGE 12

Roz thoda thoda aage badhna hai zindagi ki SIP

Zindagi ke liye SIP

News & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The maternal deaths, stillbirths, neonatal deaths in India

7.88 In lakh, India leads the list of 10 countries that account for 60% of global maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths, and 53% of live births in 2020-21, according to a UN report.

The number of hostile witnesses in Malegaon blast case

37 An unnamed witness turned hostile and reversed a statement given earlier to Maharashtra police's Anti-Terrorism Squad. This is the 37th witness to turn hostile in the cases where six people were killed.

The migrant encounters at the U.S. Mexico border in 2023

12 In lakh, Joe Biden's administration will begin granting asylum to migrants who show up at the U.S.-Mexico border without applying online or seeking protection in a country they passed through.

The number of monthly active users on TikTok in the U.S.

150 In million. The app is facing growing pressure in Washington including calls for a ban by many in Congress who fear its user data could fall into the hands of the Chinese government.

New security assistance package by the U.S. for Ukraine

1.2 In \$ billion. The military aid is provided by the U.S. to boost Ukraine's air defences. Ukraine is readying for a highly anticipated spring offensive against Russia.

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The troubles of India's aviation industry

What does GoFirst's distress call mean for the aviation sector? Why was a major section of GoFirst's aircraft grounded since last year? Why do airlines struggle to survive? What contributes to the high operating costs? What are the policy and regulatory factors affecting the industry?

EXPLAINER

Diksha Munjal

The story so far: After low-cost carrier GoFirst's insolvency filing last week, aviation safety regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday, May 8, directed the airline to stop selling air tickets immediately. The DGCA issued GoFirst a showcause notice for its "failure to continue the operation of the service in a safe, efficient and reliable manner" giving it 15 days to reply before the regulator decides on revoking the airline's permit to offer commercial flights. The unprecedented distress call by the airline that rebranded itself just two years ago raises concerns about the health of the Indian aviation industry already reeling from pandemic losses.

How big is the Indian aviation sector? The country's domestic air traffic has been recovering in the past few months after being severely hit by the coronavirus pandemic. In March, domestic carriers flew 13 million passengers, which according to the DGCA was 15% more than the same month in the pre-pandemic years of 2018 and 2019. As per the Civil Aviation Ministry, India will have more than 140 million passengers in FY2024 alone. The CAPA-Centre for Aviation projects India to handle over 1.3 billion passengers annually in the next 20 years. There are currently 148 airports in the country and it is the third largest domestic market in the world in terms of seat capacity. As of March 2023, IndiGo remained the domestic market leader with 56.8% of the market share, followed by Vistara (8.3%) and Air India (8.8%). AirAsia had 7.6% of the market, while GoFirst was at 6.9%, followed by SpiceJet at 6.4%. The newest player AkasaAir, which began operations in August 2022, managed to capture a 3.3% share.

Is the sector financially viable? Despite being touted as the "fastest growing aviation sector" in the world, airlines in the country have struggled to survive in the highly competitive and unforgiving aviation industry. While travel restrictions during the pandemic badly hit the coffers of all carriers, their financials were in the red earlier as well. While India's airlines immediately suffered huge losses (₹15,000 crore) in the financial year 2020-2021 owing to the pandemic, losses are not a post-COVID phenomenon. In 2019-20, IndiGo was the only airline to make a profit while other players posted losses led by then state-run Air India at ₹4,600 crore (Chart 1). Financial trouble has led to the folding of major airlines in the past few decades - seventeen airlines, domestic regional, have exited the market (Chart 2). Meanwhile, the consolidation of four carriers including Air India and Vistara under one umbrella by the Tata is going to make it even tougher for smaller airlines to capture the market, pointed out CAPA in its recent report. While Air India was had for competition in its earlier state-owned version, with the current consolidation, 75-80% of the market will be captured by IndiGo and Air India combined, leaving just about 20% for players like SpiceJet, GoFirst (if it revives), and the newest entrant Akasa.

What costs do airlines bear? Aviation policy is broad-based in India and is dealt with by the Ministry of Civil Aviation under the legal framework of the Aircraft Act 1934, and Aircraft Rules 1937. The DGCA is the statutory regulatory authority which comes in for issues

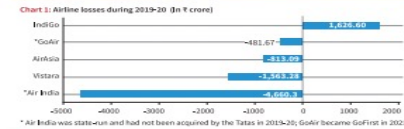
related to safety, licensing, airworthiness, and so on. While the mother Act and Rules have seen frequent modifications, aviation experts argue that India has not kept pace with modern technology in aeroplane and increasing costs to the industry which ultimately affects passenger growth. While the Indian aviation sector initially saw a boom in the 1990s after opening up as a result of liberalisation reforms and the breaking of the monopoly created by Indian Airlines and Air India, by the early 2000s, only two major airlines that were given licences (Jet Airways and Sahara) survived. Low-cost carriers then entered the market around 2003 with diversified and lower fares being expected to promote the industry's growth. However, while no-frills brands faced intense competition to keep prices low, the government levied high taxes on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF).

According to estimates, while India's airfares are 15% below the break-even point, heavily-taxed ATF contributes to the single biggest expenses of carriers, amounting to anywhere between 40-50% of operational expenses. Some Indian States impose provincial taxes of as much as 30% on jet fuel. This also makes shorter flight routes unsustainable for smaller airlines while big carriers like IndiGo offer ultra-cheap fares on routes flown by rivals using their reach to recoup costs on less-competitive legs and tapping economies of scale to lower overheads, notes a Bloomberg analysis. India's aviation policy has also posed barriers to entry and growth while also not affecting players uniformly. From 2004 to 2016, new airlines in the country had to be in operation for at least five years and have a fleet of at least 20 aircraft to be able to fly internationally, which stabilises the operations and viability of carriers. This changed with the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) in 2016, which removed the five-year domestic experience rule but kept in place the 20 aircraft fleet requirement - mandating domestic airlines to have at least 20 aircraft (or 20% of its entire fleet size whichever is higher) for domestic operations. While newer entrants to the industry, like Vistara and AirAsia India lobbied the government to remove the 5/20 rule, legacy carriers who had to meet the earlier requirements to go international opposed the change as being bad for competition.

Most Indian airlines do not own entire fleets as their financials do not allow them to shell out huge one-time payments to buy planes but lease them from companies based out of India instead. However, leasing ends up adding high costs to operations as these leases of about six months each are denominated in US dollars. Airlines have to pay annual lease rents of about ₹10,000 crore to lessors, making up nearly 15% of the revenues of Indian Airlines, except Air India which owns a large part of its fleet. The costs of these leases go up further when the Indian rupee depreciates during short and long term global financial developments, for instance, an oil price shock, which simultaneously increases the cost of ATF, compounding the carrier's expenses. Till the government's plan to get leasing companies to set up shops in India and make it a leasing hub takes off fully, the expensive lease rents for airlines and repayment feeds with issues are here to stay. Airlines also have to bear costs in terms of airport fees for the use of airport facilities including aircraft landing, freight and other charges related to the use of airport infrastructure such as runways and passenger terminals. Internationally,

No-fly zone

GoFirst airlines, which had rebranded itself two years ago, filed for bankruptcy with the National Company Law Tribunal last week. The unprecedented insolvency filing has brought India's aviation industry into the limelight. The charts below show the state of the industry and how it is trying to survive rising operational costs amid heavy competition.



THE GIST

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on May 8, directed the airline to stop selling air tickets immediately. The DGCA issued GoFirst a showcause notice for its "failure to continue the operation of the service in a safe, efficient and reliable manner".

Despite being touted as the "fastest growing aviation sector" in the world, airlines in the country have struggled to survive in the highly competitive and unforgiving aviation industry. While travel restrictions during the pandemic badly hit the coffers of all carriers, their financials were in the red earlier as well.

The layers of costs associated with policy and infrastructural incapacity affect the viability of airline which struggle to remain competitive.

airlines pass on the bulk of these charges to passengers, however, carriers in India do not remain competitive have to offer lower ticket fares to increase reach. For state-run airports, these charges are regulated by the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) but the recent privatisation of airport operations, (handing over major airports to firms like Adani) have raised concerns about further fee hikes. There are also high costs associated with the training of airline crew. Besides, the crunch in pilots is also reflective of the inadequate number of Flight Training Organisations.

Why was GoFirst's fleet grounded? Recent months saw several aircraft grounded at airports, frequent mid-air stops and cancellations due to operational reasons. As for GoFirst, which filed for bankruptcy at the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) last week, 28 of its 54 aircraft are grounded. This, it says is due to "the serial failure of Pratt & Whitney's engines, while it continued to incur 100% of its operational costs". The airline said that 50% of its fleet had to be grounded by December 2022, leading to a loss of over ₹10,000 crore for the airline. American engine maker Pratt & Whitney, meanwhile, has disputed the claim saying that the airline has a "long history of missing its financial obligations". Besides,

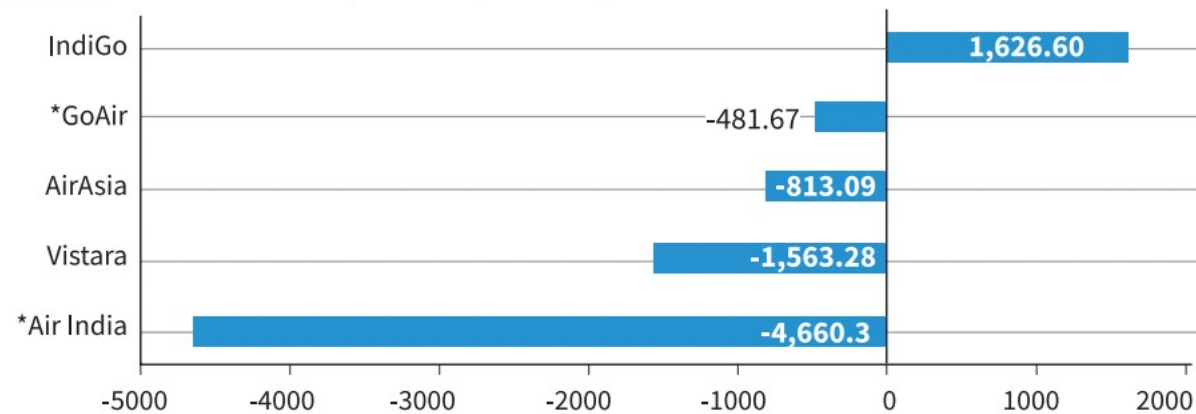
the airline has total dues amounting to ₹21,463 crore to its various creditors. While lessors are now rushing to take back their aircraft before the NCLT can impose a moratorium on claims, GoFirst is not the only low-cost carrier currently struggling with a grounded fleet. In the case of SpiceJet, its aircraft in operation are now down to about 47-50 out of a total fleet of 78-80 aircraft. Lessors have already taken back 20 of its aircraft owing to non-payment of dues. Besides, the grounding of aircraft has not resulted purely out of financial constraints. Engine and spare part issues have led to the grounding of 13% of the fleet of profit-making and market-leading IndiGo as well. Air India also has part of its fleet grounded. Supply chain troubles in the recent past have substantially affected all major players, with industry experts calling for ramping up the establishment of the Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) segment domestically. Captain G. K. Gopinath, the founder of Air Deccan, points out that there are "abyrithine taxes, customs, other duties and tortuous rules to be overcome to bring in parts, to facilitate repair and maintenance, and to get them or for use in aircraft here". The layers of costs associated with policy and infrastructural incapacity affect the viability of airlines which struggle to remain competitive.

No-fly zone

GoFirst airlines, which had rebranded itself two years ago, filed for bankruptcy with the National Company Law Tribunal last week. The unprecedented insolvency filing has brought India's aviation industry into the limelight. The charts below show the state of the industry and how it is trying to survive rising operational costs amid heavy competition



Chart 1: Airline losses during 2019-20 (In ₹ crore)



* Air India was state-run and had not been acquired by the Tatas in 2019-20; GoAir became GoFirst in 2021

Chart 2: The duration for which different airlines operated

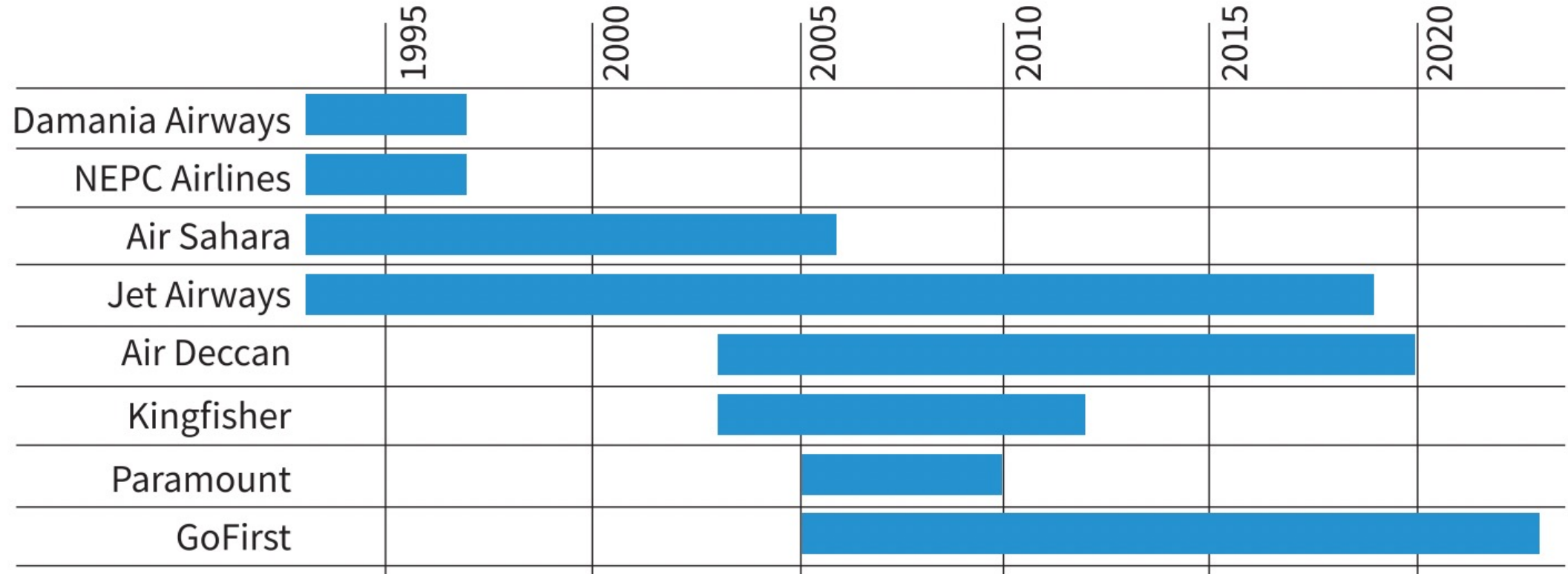
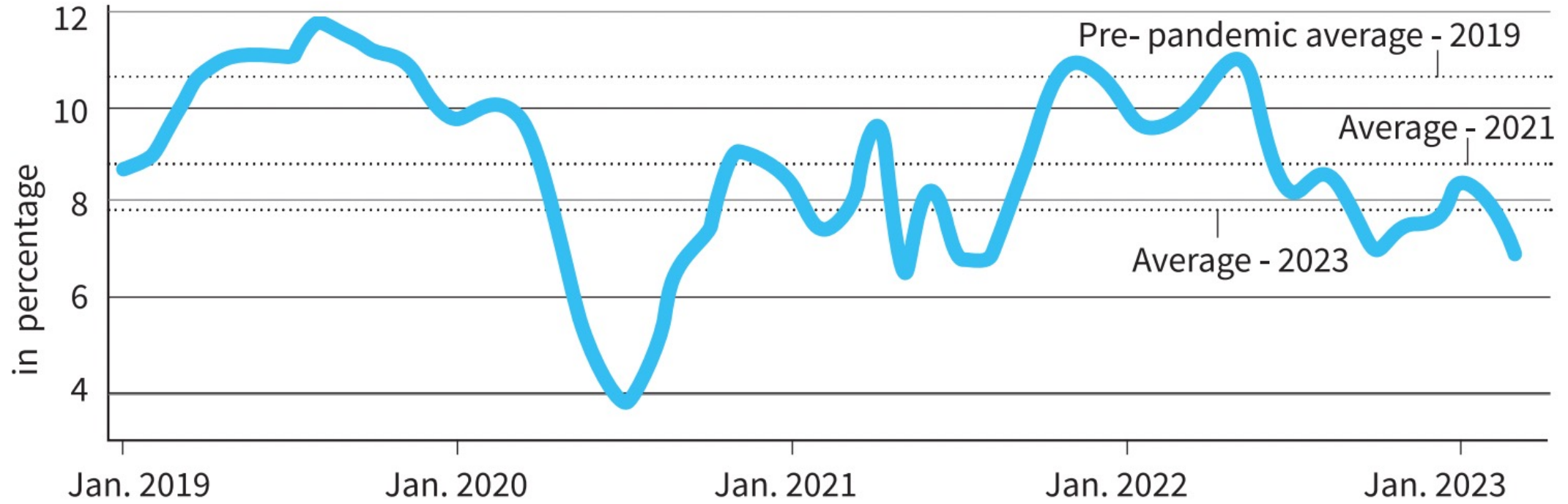
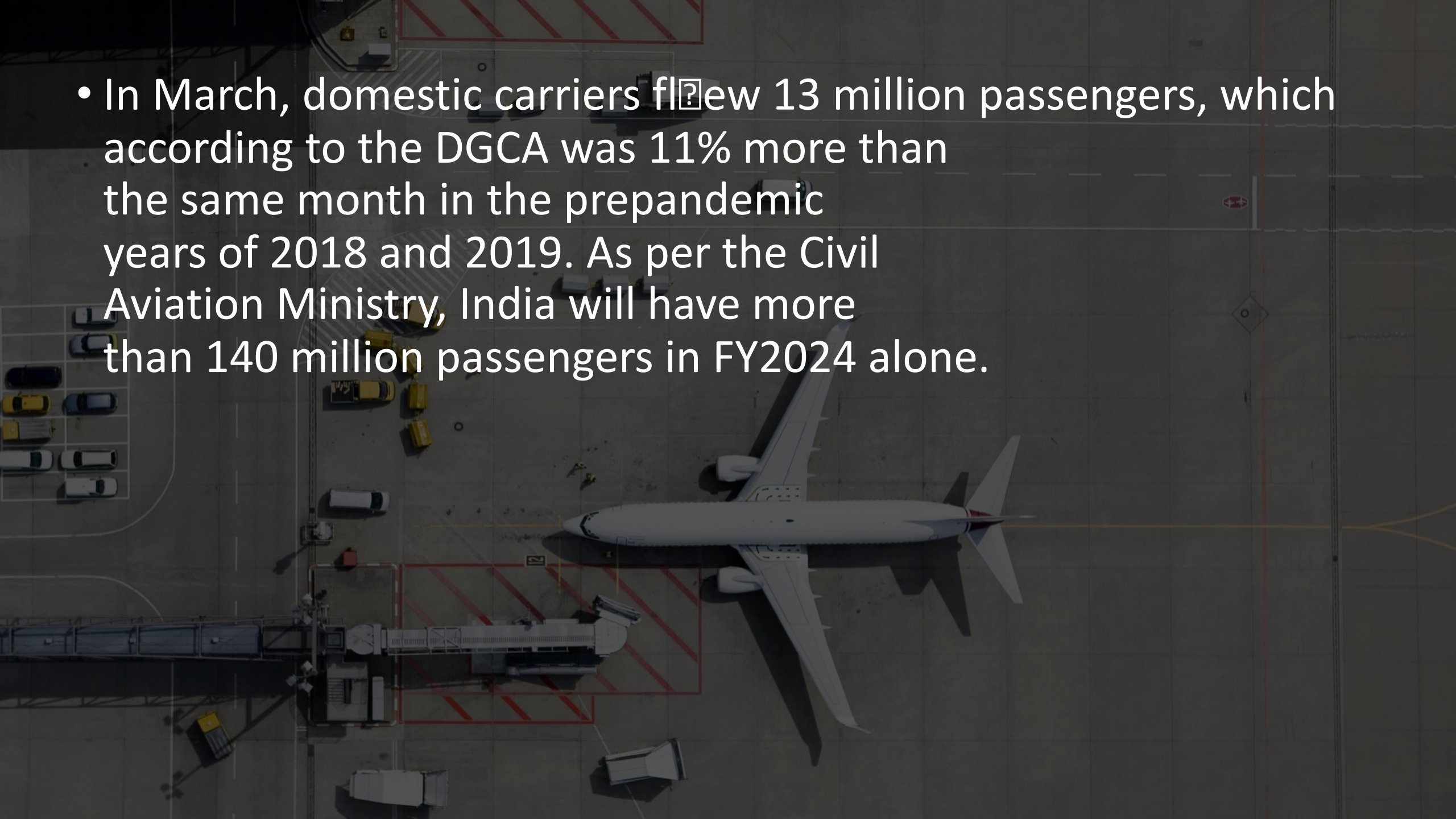


Chart 3: GoFirst's market share from 2019



- In March, domestic carriers flew 13 million passengers, which according to the DGCA was 11% more than the same month in the prepandemic years of 2018 and 2019. As per the Civil Aviation Ministry, India will have more than 140 million passengers in FY2024 alone.



- . The CAPACentre for Aviation projects India to handle over 1.3 billion passengers annually in the next 20 years. There are currently 148 airports in the country and it is the third-largest domestic market in the world in terms of seat capacity.



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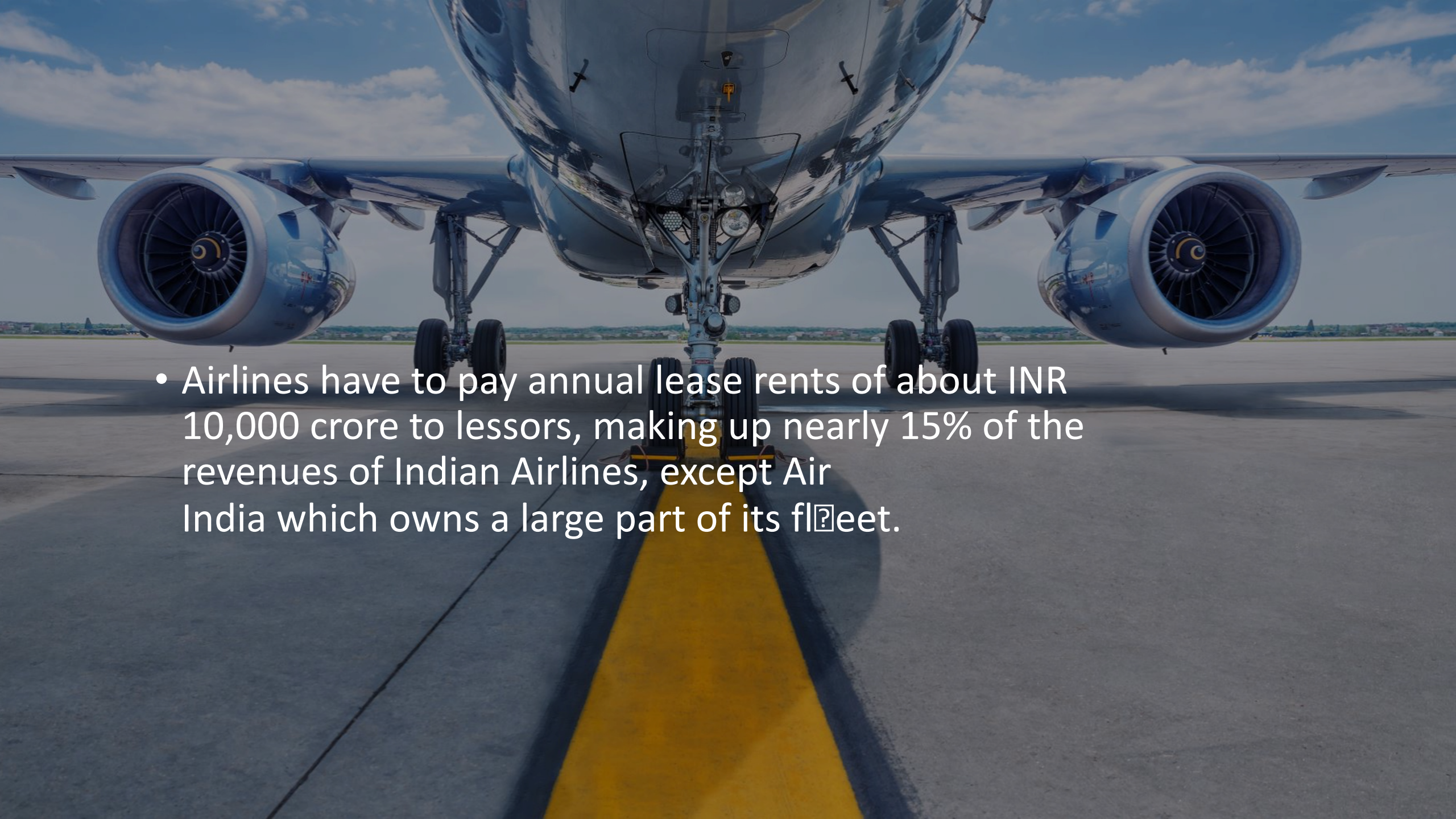
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- aviation experts argue that India has not kept pace with modern technology in aerospace and increasing costs to the industry which ultimately affects passenger growth.



the government levied high taxes on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF).



According to estimates, while India's airfares are 15% below the breakeven point, heavily taxed ATF contributes to the single biggest expenses of carriers, amounting to anywhere between 40-50% of operational expenses. Some Indian States impose provincial taxes of as much as 30% on jet fuel.



- Airlines have to pay annual lease rents of about INR 10,000 crore to lessors, making up nearly 15% of the revenues of Indian Airlines, except Air India which owns a large part of its fleet.

From Page One

Karnataka records 72.68% turnout in polls



Exercising franchise: An elderly woman being carried to the polling station at Anchargeri in Dharawad. 2023/05/11

Karnataka had reported a poll percentage of 72.45% in 2018 and 72.1% in 2018. The turnout in Bengaluru was 62% in 2013 and 57% in 2018.

The BJP in this election is trying to undo the three-decade history of a ruling party not returning to power while the Congress is trying to harness the issue of alleged corruption of the incumbent government to return to power after five years, even as the Janata Dal(S) is fighting to retain its influence in State politics.

Voting was largely peaceful barring sporadic incidents of clashes between party workers. With the election contested tightly, especially after high-pitch poll campaigns by the national leaders of both the BJP and the Congress, the tension on the battleground was visible but contained, as skirmishes were reported between party workers in several districts, including Kolar, Ballari, Vijayapura and Gadag. At Masabihal village in Basavanna Bagewadi in Vijayapura district, the polling scene turned violent as villagers smashed the spare electronic voting machines (EVM) thinking that the officials were taking them away by stopping the poll process.

Though instances of polling being held up due to snags in the EVMs were reported, Election Commission officials said that they were fewer in number due to the deployment of the M3 EVMs.

Elders came to booths

Despite the Election Commission's effort to provide vote from home for those above 80, it seemed to have been less successful in rural areas with many complaining that they did not know of the facility, but struggled to reach the polling booth to cast their vote.

EPFO offices told fix dues of subscribers

The EPFO has recently extended the date for submitting joint options with employers for availing higher pension till June 26.

"In case of acceptance of joint option of members who are still in service and officer-in-charge has passed the requisite speaking order, the present employer shall continue to pay pension contribution on higher wages in future also, including the increased 11.6% on wages above ₹15,000 per month," the circular said.

Calculation post verification

The dues will be calculated by the regional offices after the verification of wage details submitted by the employers. "In case of certified establishments, the wage details for the entire period and the matching contribution should be available with the exempted establishments and consistent with the records of the Trust," the circular added. For both exempted and unexempted establishments, the interest shall not be calculated for non-operative accounts.

Railways to proceed with closure of printing presses, despite opposition

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

Despite stiff resistance from the trade unions, the Ministry of Railways has decided to go ahead with its decision to close down its five printing presses across the network and outsource the printing of tickets until complete digitisation of the ticketing system is achieved.

The 2019 decision to close down the printing presses at Royapuram and Chennai (Southern Railway); Secunderabad (South Central Railway); Bhubaneswar (Eastern Railway); and Howrah (Northern Railway) was deferred after the All India Railwaysmen



Historical: One of the oldest printing machines at the Railway Printing Press in Chennai. 2023/05/11

Federation (AIRF), Southern Railway Mazdoor Union (SRMU) and other trade unions opposed the move.

The communication to the General Managers of all Zonal Railways, the Railway Board said a decision had now been taken to wind up the printing press-

India, U.S. to strengthen G-20 cooperation during Modi visit

PM, Biden will have the opportunity to review strong bilateral cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, including technology, clean energy, and defence, says an MEA statement

Sriram Lakshman

Welcoming the U.S. announcement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first state visit next month, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday that it would allow him and President Joe Biden to explore ways in which India and the U.S. could strengthen their cooperation. The G-20 for which India currently holds the rotating presidency and other multilateral and plurilateral forums.

"The leaders will have the opportunity to review strong bilateral cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, including technology, trade, industry, education, research, clean energy, defence security, healthcare, and deepening people-to-people connections," the MEA said in a statement.

The Indian readout went into more detail, adding



Close ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with U.S. President Joe Biden during the G-20 Summit in Indonesia. 2023/05/11

that the two leaders would reflect on "their shared vision for a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific and discuss opportunities to expand and consolidate the Quad engagement".

Mr. Modi and Mr. Biden are expected to discuss an expansion in educational exchanges, climate change, development and health security, according to people-to-people connections," the MEA said in a statement.

"This historic visit offers a valuable opportunity for India and the US to further

deepen a comprehensive and forward-looking global strategic partnership," the MEA said.

The visit will strengthen ties between the two countries' shared commitment to a free, open, prosperous, and secure Indo-Pacific and our shared resolve to elevate our strategic technology partnership, including in defense, clean energy, and health security, according to the White House said.

Mr. Modi's first state visit has been in the works for months, with Indian officials working out the logistics for it.

The Hindu had reported that Mr. Modi and Mr. Biden are also expected to interact multiple times later in May at the G-7 meeting in Hiroshima, to which India is an invitee, in Papua New Guinea where the two leaders are on overlapping visits, and at the Quad Summit in Sydney.

Since becoming PM in 2014, Mr. Modi has made more than half a dozen trips to the U.S. for bilateral and multilateral meetings with all the three President Barack Obama, Donald Trump and now Mr. Biden, but this will be his first state visit, a privilege accorded to close friends and allies of the U.S.

He last visited Washington in September 2021 at the invitation of Mr. Biden for a bilateral meeting and also as part of the first in-person Quad Leaders' Summit.

With inputs from Kalpal Bhattacharjee

RPF cracks down on fake ticket sales, arrests middlemen

Mahesh Porecha
NEW DELHI

To curb illegal selling of railway tickets, the Railway Police Force (RPF) has launched a crackdown and arrested touts and retailers of illegal software.

During the drive, RPF personnel conducted regular inspections at railway stations, reservation counters and online content to detect and apprehend unauthorised ticket booking agents.

Up to 42 illegal software pieces were detected with the arrest of 255 touts, developers, super sellers, and retailers.

During the drive, RPF personnel conducted regular inspections at railway stations, reservation counters and online content to detect and apprehend unauthorised ticket booking agents.

The RPF conducts regular checks in Passenger Reservation Systems (PRS),

Attempts to misuse reservation system come in the RPF's notice during periods of rush such as festivals and holidays

backing offices, platforms, and trains to prevent unauthorised ticketing using scripting software.

Checks and balances The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has deployed various checks and balances to prevent unscrupulous activities.

For instance, only one IRCTC user ID can be created using a given mobile number and email ID.

The circular also sets a limit on booking six railway tickets by an individual user in a month. This limit has been reviewed to 12 a month for those users who have linked their user ID with their Aadhaar and ensured that at least one of the passengers on the reservation chart is verifiable through Aadhaar.

I would have been equally angry: Alex Ellis on India's London mission attack

Subhojit Haider
NEW DELHI

"I would have been equally angry," said U.K. High Commissioner Alex Ellis, speaking about the offence at the Indian High Commission in March this year by pro-Khalistan groups who took down the Tycoon and caused a rift in ties between India and the United Kingdom.

In his first public remarks since the incident, Mr. Ellis, referring to the protests on March 19, that led to an uproar in India, and a formal demarche from the Ministry of External Affairs.

He added that tackling disinformation, radicalisation at religious institutions and other measures were the key to resolving the discussion.

"Eyes on the prize" "I think there is no disagreement between India and the U.K. about what happened at the Indian High Commission was ab-



Alex Ellis

olutely not okay," Mr. Ellis said, speaking at the Anant Centre in Delhi, referring to the protests on March 19, that led to an uproar in India, and a formal demarche from the Ministry of External Affairs.

He added that tackling disinformation, radicalisation at religious institutions and other measures were the key to resolving the discussion.

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PM to unveil plan for museum in Central Secretariat next week

Seemaparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Plans for the 'Yagee Yageen Bharat National Museum' at the iconic North and South Blocks here will be unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi next week.

The plan will be made public using a virtual walk-through at the International Museum Expo on May 18. North and South Blocks of the Central Secretariat complex were built during the 1930s.

While South Block houses the Prime Minister's Office, the External Affairs Ministry and the Defence Ministry, North Block is home to the Ministries of Public Relations and Home.

The government had announced plans to convert North and South Blocks into museums in 2021.

Apart from unravelling the [current] National Museum would be shifted to a new site of its kind, show which aims to facilitate part of the Kartavya Parb," Minister of State for Culture Meebani Lekhi said on Wednesday.

The plan will be made public using a virtual walk-through at the International Museum Expo on May 18.

The foundation stone of the current National Museum was laid by the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, in 1955.

The new Museum at North and South Blocks will depict the story of India's rich civilisational culture of 5,000-plus years showcasing the various sections or khands tracing the continuous journey of Indian civilisation, the Union Culture Ministry said.

The Museum will cover an area of 1.17 lakh sq. m with 950 rooms spread over a basement and ground and two more floors.

Apart from unravelling the blueprint, the three-day International Museum Expo would be a first-of-its-kind show which aims to facilitate part of the Kartavya Parb," Minister of State for Culture Meebani Lekhi said on Wednesday.

Santiniketan may be added to World Heritage List

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Santiniketan, associated with Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, has been recommended for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The quiet town in West Bengal's Birbhum district is also home to the Vivekananda University built by Tagore. The recommendation was made by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which is the advisory body to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, based on a file moved by the Centre.

The nomination would be formally announced at the World Heritage Committee meeting to be held at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in September 2023, Union Minister for Culture G. Kishan Reddy said.

Santiniketan, if selected, would be the second cultural symbol from West Bengal, to make it to the UNESCO list. In 2021, UNESCO had included 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

DRDO official held for spying has links to RSS: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A DRDO scientist who was arrested by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad for passing on open market information to a Pakistani intelligence operative was linked to the RSS, the Congress alleged on Wednesday.

Addressing a press conference, Congress spokespersons said the arrest of Pradeep Kumar, a DRDO scientist, was linked to the RSS.

He further said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should answer what was the relationship between the RSS and the matter pertained to national security.

Cybercrime racket in Nuh duped 28,000 people of ₹100 crore: Haryana Police

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

The cybercrime racket busted in Nuh a fortnight ago had duped around 28,000 people of ₹100 crore across the country, the Haryana Police said on Wednesday.

In some cases, the accused had lured people through online advertisements with sales on different products and work-from-home jobs, and enticed them through money-trap.

Sixty-six people were arrested during searches in 14 villages of Nuh in the early hours of April 28 in connection with the racket. The police said 20 are still at large. Of those on the run, 20 are from Ra-



Police Varun Singla, in a press conference, said the accused would lure people with attractive offers of sales on motorcycles, cars or mobile phones and seek money on the pretext of courier and transportation charges, but the goods were never delivered.

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The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Santiniketan, associated with Nobel laureate Rabin-dranath Tagore, has been recommended for inclusion on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The quaint town in West Bengal's Birbhum district is also home to the Visva-Bharati University built by Tagore. The recommendation was made by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which is the advisory body to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, based on a file moved by the Centre.

The nomination would be formally announced at the World Heritage Committee meeting to be held at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in September 2023, Union Minister for Culture G. Kishen Reddy said.

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THE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE OF **SHANTINIKETAN**

- It was established by Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, and later expanded by his son, Rabindranath Tagore whose vision became what is now a university town with the creation of Visva-Bharati



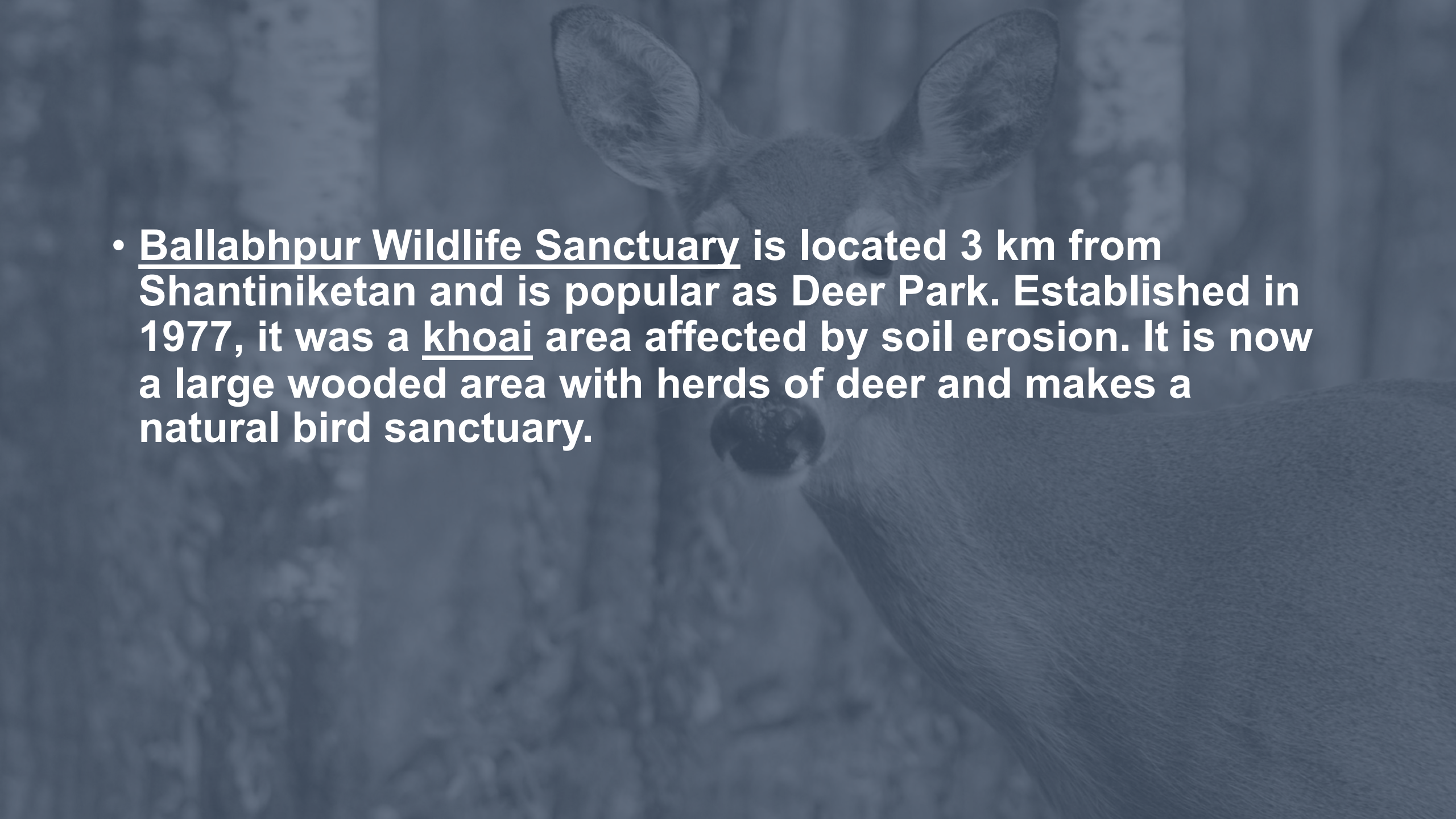
In 1863, [Debendranath Tagore](#) took on permanent lease 20 acres (81,000 m²) of land, with two *chhatim* ([Alstonia scholaris](#)) trees, at an annual payment of Rs. 5, from Bhuban Mohan Sinha, the [talukdar](#) of Raipur, Birbhum.



He built a guest house there and named it *Shantiniketan* (the abode of peace). Gradually, the whole area came to be known as Shantiniketan





- 
- **Ballabhpur Wildlife Sanctuary** is located 3 km from Shantiniketan and is popular as Deer Park. Established in 1977, it was a khoai area affected by soil erosion. It is now a large wooded area with herds of deer and makes a natural bird sanctuary.

IN BRIEF



SC turns down Sanjiv Bhatt's plea to submit more evidence

The Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected a plea by former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Sanjiv Bhatt to submit additional evidence to back his appeal pending in the Gujarat High Court against conviction in a 1990 custodial death case. A Bench of Justices M.R. Shah and C.T. Ravikumar also rejected Mr. Bhatt's plea seeking recusal of Justice Shah from hearing the matter. Mr. Bhatt had contended that there was a reasonable apprehension of bias as Justice Shah as High Court judge, had castigated the petitioner while hearing his plea linked to the same First Information Report (FIR).

Background 'mic access' by WhatsApp to be investigated

Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Wednesday that the IT Ministry would investigate a claim that messaging platform WhatsApp accessed a user's microphone while he was sleeping. "WhatsApp has been using the microphone in the background, while I was asleep and since I woke up at 6 a.m.," Road Daberi, an engineering director at Twitter, said on Saturday. "What's going on?" The tweet went viral, attracting over 100,000 retweets. WhatsApp said in a statement that the issue was likely a bug and Google has been asked to investigate the issue and remedy it.

CBSE flags fake notice on Class 10, 12 result date

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has flagged as fake a "circular" that the results of Class 10 and 12 will be declared on Thursday. The hoax had gone viral on social media, causing anxiety to students and parents.

In an official tweet on Wednesday, the CBSE flagged the fake notice. The Board said it would confirm the date of the results soon. Candidates would get the official notice on its website, www.cbse.gov.in. The fake notice had the forged signature of Joseph Emmanuel, Director (Academics), CBSE. It said that students could access results using a registered mobile number and enter the security pin and the OTP.

Student death: court says no proof of caste harassment

The Hindu Bureau MUMBAI

A special court in Mumbai has granted bail to a student accused in the suicide of his batch mate Darshan Solanki in the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay.

"More allegations in a suicide note would not be sufficient to draw conclusion that the accused had committed the offence of abetment," the court said in its order.

On May 6, Additional Sessions Judge A.P. Kanade granted bail to Armaan Khatri, 18. A detailed court order, made available on Wednesday, said, "...there is nothing on record to show that the applicant/accused was harassing the deceased on the ground of caste discrimination."

"Except one incident of showing the paper cutter to the deceased by the applicant, there is nothing on record to show that the accused instigated the deceased Darshan to commit suicide," it said.

Those who require assistance for overcoming suicidal thoughts may contact Sarthi, Society for Mental Health on 011-4076 2002 (10 am to 7.30 p.m., Monday-Saturday).

IIT not to reopen application window for JEE (Advanced)

Nearly 2.5 lakh candidates qualified for JEE (Advanced) after the JEE (Main) and 1.95 lakh of them have registered for the examination

A.M. Hareesh NEW DELHI

The number of applications for the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), Advanced has increased by 20% to 30% from last year's figure, and the organising institute, the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, has no plans to reopen the application window. The last date for registration was May 7.

The organising chairman of the examination, Bishnupada Mandal, told The Hindu that nearly 2.5 lakh candidates qualified for the JEE (Advanced) after the JEE (Main), and 1.95 lakh of them had registered for the examination.

There are more than 100 foreign candidates and nearly 800 belong to overseas Indian and people of Indian origin categories, Professor Mandal said.

He said that usually, the number of applicants varied between 1.5 lakh and 1.6 lakh. "The highest number in the past was 1.7 lakh. But this year, we have an increase of about 20% to 30%," he said.

There is a steady increase in the number of students every year. "This time, there is no COVID. Previous years, there was a little drop due to COVID," he said.

Asked about the requests from sections of students that the last date to submit applications for the exam, Professor Mandal said, "It is usual. Every year, some students who miss the deadline write to us. But we follow a strict deadline," he said.



Organising hubs: The JEE (Advanced) is conducted by the various IITs on a rotational basis. FILE PHOTO

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Foreign medical graduates can intern in any State

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The State Medical Councils shall not deny allotment of medical colleges for internships to foreign medical graduates (FMGs) on the basis of their domicile, and they can complete their internship from a medical college in any State or Union Territory if they are otherwise eligible, the National Medical Commission (NMC) has said.

The commission has released a list of recognised non-teaching hospitals for compulsory rotating internships across the country. Guidelines issued The regulatory body for medical education, and medical professionals has also issued a consolidated circular of guidelines on the mode and method of medical internships for foreign medical graduates in India. The NMC noted that requests may be posted to medical colleges or institutions through a counselling or seat allocation process based on merit.

It added that a number of requests and queries from different State Medical Councils had been received on the non-avail-

State Medical Councils cannot deny allotments on the basis of domicile

ability of seats for them to begin their internships in their State, especially because of the implementation of two-year internship for them.

"It has been decided by the Undergraduate Medical Education Board to validate the list of recognised non-teaching hospitals for compulsory rotating medical internship issued by the erstwhile Medical Council of India, for a period of one year up to May 2024 for conducting of internship for FMGs only. This relaxation is granted only as a one-time measure. The allotment of FMGs in these non-teaching hospitals shall also be done only through the concerned State Medical Council," the NMC said.

It has also clarified that the provision of the two-year internship (the notice was issued in 2022) is applicable only to those in the last year of their study who had returned to India due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and so on.

Study on sludge finds high potential for use as fertilizer after treatment

Jacob Koshy NEW DELHI

A first-of-its-kind analysis of the sludge found in Indian sewage treatment plants (STPs), set up to treat polluted water from the Ganga, found that most of it had "high potential" for use as fertilizer, but required treatment before it could be used unrestricted on farms or as a potential biofuel.

An emerging initiative of the National Mission for Clean Ganga, a flagship programme of the government to establish treatment facilities and prevent pollution of the river, is to derive livelihood opportunities from the river reclamation programme. One of the measures under this, "Arth Ganga" (economic value from Ganga), is to "monetise" and reuse treated wastewater and sludge. This means con-



Wastewater when treated leaves behind organic sludge that is also a repository of effluents and bacterial contaminants. FILE PHOTO

verting sludge — a thick residue that while rich in organic chemicals is also a repository of heavy metals, industrial effluents and bacterial contaminants — into usable products such as manure and bricks. Treated sludge can be classified as class A or B — the standards of the United States Environmental Protection Agency — with class A being safe to be disposed of in the open and useful as organic fertilizer. Class B means that the sludge can be used in "restricted" agricultural applications, the edible parts of the crop not be exposed to the sludge-mixed soil, and animals and people not come into direct contact. India does not yet have standards classifying sludge as class A or B.

A study by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee found that most of

the sludge analysed after drying fell into the class B category. Nitrogen and phosphorus levels, the basic soil nutrients — were higher than those recommended by India's own standards (FPO, 2009). However, potassium levels in some samples were less than recommended.

The total organic carbon was more than 16%, again higher than FPO recommendations, but the degree of pathogen as well as heavy metal contamination was above the recommended standard.

"This is the first time such a project has been conceived in India," D.P. Mathuria, a senior official in the NMC, said. "Only when we have data about the chemical characteristics of the sludge can we then ask developers to adopt practices on treatment and safe disposal of sludge."

ICMR conducts trial run of blood bag delivery by drone

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Wednesday successfully conducted a trial run of delivery of blood bags under its i-DRONE initiative.

The trial run has been undertaken for the first time in the country by the ICMR, Lady Hardinge Medical College (LHMC), Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS), Greater Noida, and the Jaypee Institute of Information Technology (JIIT), Noida, a release issued by the Health Ministry said.

The inaugural flight carried 10 units of whole blood samples.

The i-DRONE was first used to deliver blood products pandemic by the ICMR for

distributing vaccines to remote areas. Today, we are transporting blood and blood-related products which are supposed to be kept at a low temperature. After the experiment, we found that not only can we maintain the temperature, there was also no damage to the products transported," Rajiv Bahl, Director-General, ICMR, said.

Multiple drone flights will be conducted to validate the quality of blood products transported.

Chief Justice D. Y. Chandrachud initially told senior advocates Harish Salgaonkar that the appeal against the Kerala High Court's refusal to stay the release of the movie on May 5 was coming up for hearing on May 15, and this case could be listed along with that. Mr. Salgaonkar said that the appeal makers were "losing money every day."

Multiple petitioners have argued that the film demonised Muslims, particularly youth.

The Kerala Story: SC to hear plea against ban

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday urgently listed a petition filed by the makers of the The Kerala Story against the ban in West Bengal on screening the film, and the Tamil Nadu government's de facto freeze on the movie for a hearing on Friday.

Chief Justice D. Y. Chandrachud initially told senior advocates Harish Salgaonkar that the appeal against the Kerala High Court's refusal to stay the release of the movie on May 5 was coming up for hearing on May 15, and this case could be listed along with that. Mr. Salgaonkar said that the appeal makers were "losing money every day."

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Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions. Clues include: 16. Slight mispronunciation (4), 17. Angry conser loses head (5), 18. Female took the lead and starped (4), 19. Rejected red rum results in homicide (8), 20. Relatives who may be peeps on Sunday (8), 21. Extraordinary date about one and a half (9), 22. Doctor's consulting place has some trainee in small measure (8), 23. Swiss member state soldiers start to train in military area (10), 24. Insonic hero's pain (4). Down: 1. Old bouncer can make meat and cheese dish (8,4), 2. Felt confused about residual food (9), 3. Fruit? Cone and berry consumes (8), 4. Got leaves die nitrogen capital for country in Asia (4), 5. How to cook eggs or order fighter planes into action? (6), 6. Dishonestly induced hiding of bones in sack (9), 7. Also, crown and officers in Rome (2,2), 8. Yankee devours poet (5), 9. Breaking the leg ring? Go ahead! (5,5), 10. For starters, Indian Railways train is vandalised before commencement of tour. It can be troublesome... (6), 11. It's time for celebration if valets dance (8), 12. Girl making first entrance in society had discussion (9), 13. Wrong excise tax after exporting gas results in stir (6), 14. One vehicle for someone terrible? (4), 15. Observed new bishop's jurisdiction at first (4).

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers and solutions. The grid is a 9x9 grid with some numbers filled in. Solutions are provided for the grid and for a previous day's puzzle.

FAITH Sumantra consoles king. Dasaratha and Kausalya are unable to come to terms with Rama's absence. Sumantra is a wise minister, offering good counsel to the king in difficult times, said Navajyotish Kam Vasaidevachariar, in a discourse. So he now offers words of consolation to the royal family. He says that there is no need for such anguish on their part, for Rama Himself is calm and content. He is not upset about having to live in the forest, away from the comforts of palace life. As for Lakshmana it is enough if he is able to serve Rama. Had he been in the palace, he would not have been able to serve Rama in so many ways, for the servants would not have allowed Lakshmana to undertake all these tasks. After all Lakshmana too was a prince, and the servants would have thought it their duty to serve Rama, and not the duty of prince Lakshmana. But in the forest, Lakshmana has the joy of doing everything possible for Rama.

ICMR conducts trial run of blood bag delivery by drone

The Hindu Bureau

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The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Wednesday successfully conducted a trial run of delivery of blood bags under its iDrone initiative.

The trial run has been undertaken for the first time in the country by the ICMR; Lady Hardinge Medical College (LHMC); Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS), Greater Noida; and the Jaypee Institute of Information Technology (JIIT), Noida, a release issued by the Health Ministry said.

The inaugural trial flight carried 10 units of whole blood samples from the GIMS and the LHMC in visual line of sight.

“The i-DRONE was first used during the COVID-19 pandemic by the ICMR for




The inaugural flight carried 10 units of whole blood samples.

distributing vaccines to remote areas. Today, we are transporting blood and blood-related products which are supposed to be kept at a low temperature. After the experiment, we found that not only can we maintain the temperature, there was also no damage to the products transported,” Rajiv Bahl, Director-General, ICMR, said.

More drone flights will be conducted to validate the quality of blood products transported.



Predecessor	Indian Research Fund Association
Formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1911 (as IRFA)• 1949 Renamed as ICMR
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
Budget	₹2,359.58 crore (US\$300 million) (2023–2024) ^[1]

STATES WANT MORE TIME: CENTRE TO SC Rajasthan, Assam and Andhra oppose plea on same-sex marriage

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
THE CENTRE on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that it had received responses from even states on the plea to grant equal recognition to same-sex marriages. While three states — Rajasthan, Assam and Andhra Pradesh — have opposed the plea, the remaining four states — Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur — have sought more time.
The Centre had sought the views of all states and Union territories after the Supreme Court took up petitions seeking legislation of same-sex marriages. Solicitor General Tushar Devita, appearing for the Centre, told a five-judge Constitutional Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, that he was placing the states' responses in record. The Bench also comprises Justices S.K. Kaul, S.B. Botla, Hima Kohli and P.S. Narasimha. In its response, the Congress-led Rajasthan government

said the public mood in the state appears to be against same-sex marriages. It, however, added that if two people of the same sex voluntarily decide to live together, it cannot be termed wrong.
Citing a report of its social justice and empowerment department, the state said same-sex marriages will create imbalance in the social fabric, which can have far-reaching adverse implications for the social and family systems.
It said it had written to all district collectors, who signed the each practices are not prevalent in any district and would be against public opinion. The state added that if public opinion was in favour of same-sex marriages, the state legislature or Parliament would have taken steps to bring a law by now.

The BJP Congress-led Andhra Pradesh government said that it consulted heads of various religions, adding that Hindus, Muslims and Christian religions broadly opposed the plea. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Unanimous SC verdicts today in Sena case, Delhi vs Centre power tussle

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
THE SUPREME COURT will on Thursday pronounce its much-awaited verdicts in two crucial matters: last year's political crisis in Maharashtra triggered by the rift in the Shiv Sena, and the dispute between the Centre and Jharkhand government over control of administrative services in the national capital.
The matters were heard by a five-judge Constitutional Bench comprising Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices M.T. Shah, Krishna Murari, Hima Kohli and P.S. Narasimha.
Thursday's cause list, which is the list of business for the day, shows that both judgments are unanimous and are by a majority.
The five-judge Bench had rendered its judgment in the Delhi Govt vs Centre matter on January 18 and the Maharashtra matter in March 16 this year.
Hearing petitions by the Jharkhand Thackeray and Eknath Shinde groups following the rift in the Sena and subsequent fall of the MVA government, the SC Bench had wondered how it can



SC is hearing petitions filed by the Siddharth Thackeray and Eknath Shinde groups

reinstatate the Thackeray government even if a final order of the Government's action in calling for a trust vote is illegal, given that the former chief minister had resigned without facing the floor test — "accepting" that he was in a minority.
It is like the court being told to put back a government, which had already been removed, and it is a minority, the Bench had said.
The court also questioned the Government's role and said he must have asked himself what had suddenly happened that after enjoying the fruits of power for three years, a section of the MLAs decided to part ways with the MVA government.
On the Governor asking **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

ED: Huge liquor quantities illegally sold by state PSU in Chhattisgarh

JEEPTIMATI TIWARY
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
"ROBING THE liquor scam, the Enforcement Directorate has alleged that Chhattisgarh's state-owned marketing company did record in its books supply of 10 lakh cases of country liquor by distillers and sold through its own vendors to the common public at a price of Rs 1,800 per case without earning any revenue to the exchequer.
According to investigation

PAGE 1 MURDER IGONASA SINHA

IGONASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
HAR WADKI darr lagta tha, koi na us case wazip leke ko bolu tha, meri man mein aisa hi hoga ki wo be care all the time, people would insist on stopping the case (even if I did not relent)". A day after a court convicted three men of aiding her during the 2013 Anusara-farmagiar, the survivor, now 36, told The Indian Express that the road to justice was long and that she had to suffer and her perseverance paid off.
While one of the accused, the taluqedar, died in jail three years ago, the two surviving men, significant her and Sikandar, were sentenced to 20 years' rigorous imprisonment.
Outside her home on Wednesday, there was heavy police deployment. She was accompanied by her lawyer, who said she was among the roughly half-a-dozen women who had sought justice for rape during the riots, but she also could see things through.
Additional District Judge Anupam Kumar Singh, who was sentencing the accused, said in the 800-page order that they committed rape against a "helpless woman" when she along with her son was fleeing through the

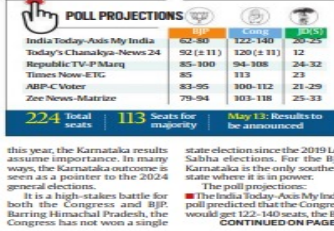


At a polling booth in Bengaluru. Voter turnout for Karnataka Assembly polls was 73% on Wednesday. **EXPRESS REPORTS, PAGE 8**

73 PER CENT TURNOUT IN ASSEMBLY POLLS Karnataka exit polls forecast: Clear advantage to Congress

JD(S) may play key role, say pollsters; CM Bommai says BJP's ground report different

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
AS POLLING for the Karnataka Assembly elections concluded on Wednesday, most of the exit polls gave the Congress a clear lead over the ruling BJP, with at least two pollsters predicting that the BJP would win most of the others projected that the Congress would hover around 100 seats. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



Wrestlers' protest: Minor complainant records statement before magistrate

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
THE LONE minor among the seven female wrestlers, who filed police complaints alleging sexual harassment by Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president and BJP MP Brih Bhushan Sharan Singh, has recorded her statement before a magistrate under Section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc).
The minor appeared before a magistrate and gave her statement on Wednesday, a senior officer from the Delhi Police headquarters confirmed.
The police officer also confirmed that a notice had been sent to the WFI, asking it to provide certain documents and details of tournaments in which the complainants had participated. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



At the wrestlers' protest in New Delhi on Wednesday. **EXPRESS PHOTO**

PM'S FIRST STATE VISIT USM President Biden to host Modi for three state visit in June

PM may lead Yoga Day June 21; state dinner June 22

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
FOR THE first time in nine years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to the US for an official state visit from June 21 to 24, where he will be hosted by US President Joe Biden at the White House.
Modi, who will travel to Australia, Japan and Papua New Guinea this month, is likely to meet Biden at least four times within a month, between May 19 and June 22. He will go to Hiroshima (Japan) for the G-7 summit (May 19-21), then to Papua New Guinea for the Pacific Islands' leaders' summit, and Australia for the Quad leaders' summit. Biden will also visit these three countries at the same time.
This is Modi's first state visit to the US since he assumed office in 2014. His previous visits to the US to meet then Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump at the White House were considered as state visits. The last official state visit by an



Modi, Biden at G20 Summit in Bali last year. **ANI FILE**

Indian Prime Minister to the US was undertaken by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in November 2009.
State visits are considered to be the highest expression of friendly bilateral relations and are replete with official public ceremonies. In the US, these ceremonies include a flight line ceremony (where the visiting head of state is greeted at the same time after landing), a 21-gun salute White House arrival ceremony, a White House dinner, exchange of diplomatic gifts, an invitation to stay at the Blair House (US President's guesthouse across the Pennsylvania Avenue), and flag street-lighting.
Modi, according to sources, will start his visit from New York, where he will lead the International Yoga Day celebrations. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

SEVEN KILLED IN PAK CLASHES, IMRAN KHAN SENT TO CUSTODY FOR EIGHT DAYS

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, MAY 10
THE SURGE in India's import of Russian crude oil has come under the spotlight, but a sharp pick-up in India-Russia trade in another commodity has largely been under the radar. India's exports of aluminium oxide, or alumina, to Russia jumped to 2.58 lakh tonnes in April, February of financial year 2022-23 (FY23) from nil in the corresponding period of FY22, latest available data with the Indian commerce ministry shows.
Like in the case of crude oil, shifting global trade flows in the aftermath of Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine largely behind this trend.
As a major producer of aluminium, which is used in a wide array of industries, Russia is a major alumina consumer. Alumina is mainly used in the production of aluminium metal, but is also used as an abrasive due to its hardness and as a refractory material due to its high melting point. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

Alumina exports to Russia surge as others avoid sale to Moscow

From nil, India exports 2.58 lakh tonnes in 11 months; Russia 3rd largest buyer

SHAJU PHILIP
TRIVANANTHAPURAM, MAY 10
A 23-YEAR-OLD doctor was stabbed to death on Wednesday at a government hospital in Kerala's Kollam district by a 42-year-old school teacher, who was brought to the hospital by police for treatment of an injury he suffered earlier.
The assailant stabbed Dr Vandana Das multiple times with scissors after he was taken into a room to dress his wound. According to police, 42-year-old S Sandeep was under the



Dr Vandana Das, 23, was brought to the hospital by police for treatment of an injury he suffered earlier. **PTI**

felicitated, thanked god and hugged her children. "It's a big victory but it came at a cost. I had to lose my child. They also need a normal life. I can't say anything to my children at present but one day they will understand what their parents went through. I did it only for them. I don't want anything like this to happen to my children or my child; I know how it affects a person," she said.
The woman, who was 26 at the time of the riots, recalled: "I remember I was running away from home because there were people who were carrying my child through a field and

'I was scared all the time, people said drop the case, I did not relent'

couldn't run fast. I can never forget that day. They had weapons; they raped me and threatened to kill me. I was in a state of fear and I burnt our house. Initially, I didn't share this with anyone. I found courage when I saw other women (who had come forward to report similar crimes), and told my husband about it. The victim's lawyer repeatedly for enforcement of her fundamental right to a fair trial and speedy justice. The trial itself was protracted and deliberately dragged out to exhaust the victim. This case is a testament to the accused. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

THE WORLD

SEVEN KILLED IN PAK CLASHES, IMRAN KHAN SENT TO CUSTODY FOR EIGHT DAYS
SEVEN people were killed in clashes between the Taliban and the Pakistani army in the northwestern province of FATA, according to a statement from the Pakistani government. Imran Khan, the prime minister, was taken to custody for eight days.

ALUMINA EXPORTS TO RUSSIA SURGE AS OTHERS AVOID SALE TO MOSCOW
From nil, India exports 2.58 lakh tonnes in 11 months; Russia 3rd largest buyer

KERALA DOCTOR STABBED TO DEATH BY MAN BROUGHT FOR TREATMENT
A 23-year-old doctor was stabbed to death on Wednesday at a government hospital in Kerala's Kollam district by a 42-year-old school teacher, who was brought to the hospital by police for treatment of an injury he suffered earlier.

WRESTLERS' PROTEST: MINOR COMPLAINANT RECORDS STATEMENT BEFORE MAGISTRATE
The lone minor among the seven female wrestlers, who filed police complaints alleging sexual harassment by Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president and BJP MP Brih Bhushan Sharan Singh, has recorded her statement before a magistrate under Section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc).

ED: HUGE LIQUOR QUANTITIES ILLEGALLY SOLD BY STATE PSU IN CHHATTISGARH
The Enforcement Directorate has alleged that Chhattisgarh's state-owned marketing company did record in its books supply of 10 lakh cases of country liquor by distillers and sold through its own vendors to the common public at a price of Rs 1,800 per case without earning any revenue to the exchequer.

PM'S FIRST STATE VISIT USM PRESIDENT BIDEN TO HOST MODI FOR THREE STATE VISIT IN JUNE
PM may lead Yoga Day June 21; state dinner June 22

UNANIMOUS SC VERDICTS TODAY IN SENNA CASE, DELHI VS CENTRE POWER TUSSE
The Supreme Court will on Thursday pronounce its much-awaited verdicts in two crucial matters: last year's political crisis in Maharashtra triggered by the rift in the Shiv Sena, and the dispute between the Centre and Jharkhand government over control of administrative services in the national capital.

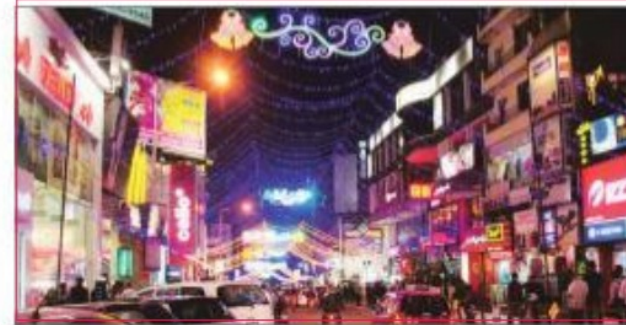
WRESTLERS' PROTEST: MINOR COMPLAINANT RECORDS STATEMENT BEFORE MAGISTRATE
The lone minor among the seven female wrestlers, who filed police complaints alleging sexual harassment by Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president and BJP MP Brih Bhushan Sharan Singh, has recorded her statement before a magistrate under Section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc).

TOP HIGH STREETS IN INDIA

Bengaluru's MG Road best in experience , Delhi's Khan Market most expensive

BENGALURU'S MG ROAD tops the list of best high streets in India based on consumer experience, followed by Somajiguda in Hyderabad and Linking Road in Mumbai, according to retail and real estate consultancy Knight Frank. However, when it comes to rentals, Delhi's Khan Market is the most expensive. Bengaluru, the report said, had four of the country's top 10 high streets, based on parking, public transport, store visibility, spending quotient and average trading density. South Extension (Part 1 and Part 2) in Delhi is at the fourth position in this list, while Park and Camac Street in Kolkata is at fifth spot.

Compiled by **Viveat Susan Pinto**



TOP 5 HIGH STREETS IN INDIA

(based on consumer experience)

Location	Index*
Bengaluru (MG Road)	3.18
Hyderabad (Somajiguda)	2.92
Mumbai (Linking Road)	2.71
Delhi (South Extension I/II)	2.57
Kolkata (Park & Camac Street)	2.51

*Index value derived by Knight Frank based on five parameters

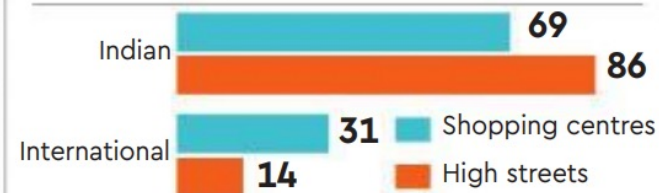
MOST EXPENSIVE HIGH STREETS IN INDIA

(based on rental range)

Location	Rental (per sq ft/month)
Delhi (Khan Market)	₹1,000-1,500
Gurugram (DLF Galleria)	₹800-1,200
Mumbai (Linking Road)	₹350-1,000

SHOPPING CENTRES VS HIGH STREETS

(based on brands), in %




Source: Knight Frank

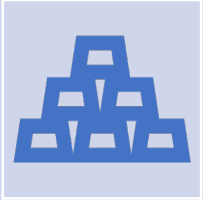
RBI's Gold Reserves



As per RBI's Half Yearly Report on Management of Foreign Exchange Reserves: October 2022 - March 2023, its gold reserves touched 794.64 metric tonnes in FY 22-23, an increase of nearly 5% over FY 21-22(760.42 metric tonnes)



Gold reserves along with foreign currency assets, special drawing rights and reserve tranche position in the International Monetary Fund make up India's forex reserves.



As per RBI, **437.22 tonnes of gold are held overseas** are held with the Bank of England and the **Bank of International Settlements (BIS)**, and **301.10 tonnes of gold is held domestically.**



As on March 31, 2023, the **country's total forex reserves stood at \$578.449 billion**, and **gold reserves were pegged at \$45.2 billion.**

In value terms (USD), **the share of gold in the total forex Eerves increased to about 7.81% at the end of March 2023.**





Forex Reserves Component	Billion \$	%
1. Foreign Currency Assets	519.5	88.22%
2. Gold	45.7	7.76%
3. SDRs	18.5	3.14%
4. Reserve Position in IMF	5.2	0.88%
Total Forex Reserves	588.9	100.00%

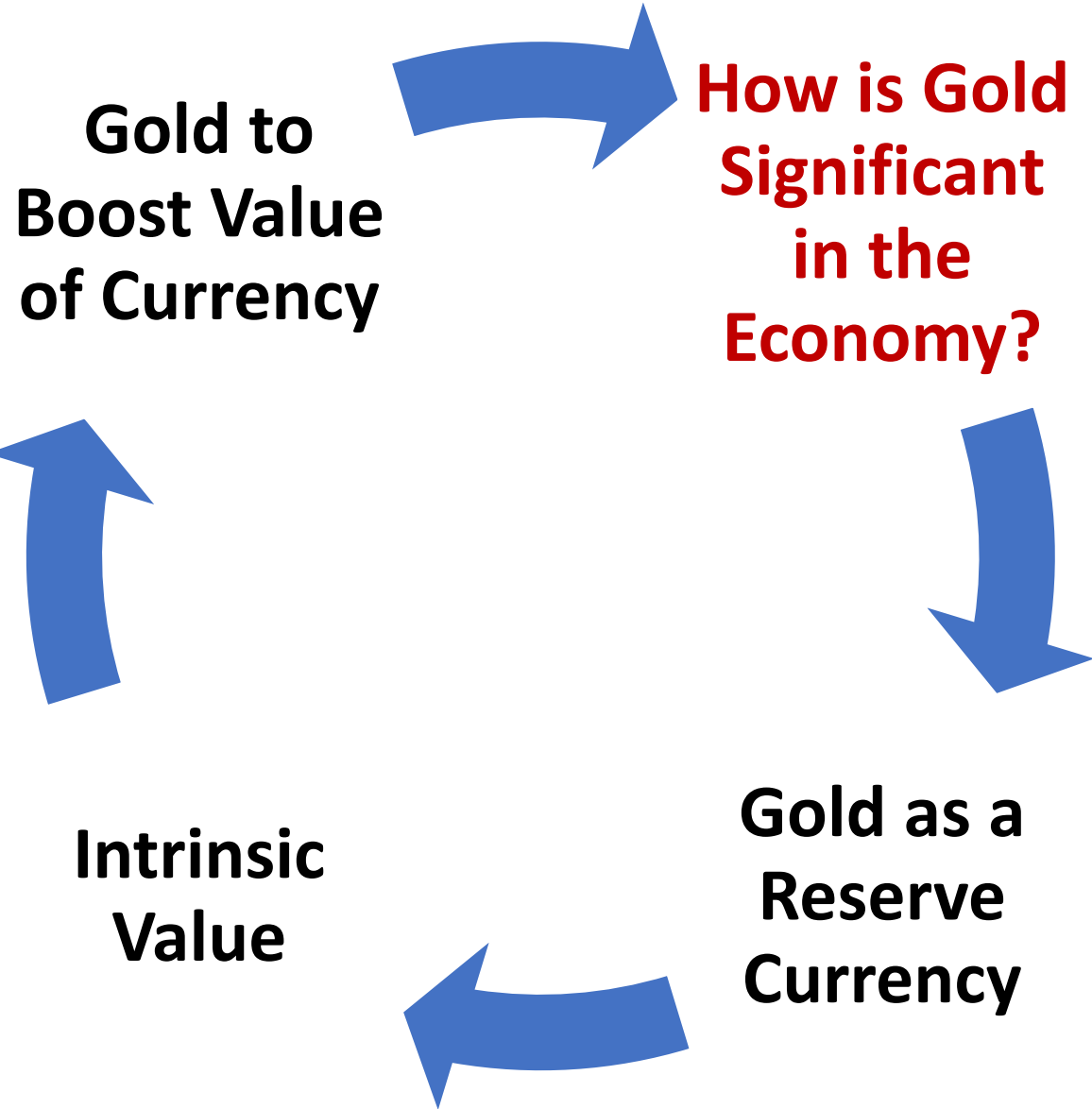
- **Recent Purchase:**

- The RBI **bought 34.22 tonnes of gold in FY 23 (65.11 tonnes of gold in fiscal 2022).**
 - Between FY 2019 – FY 2021, **RBI's gold reserves were 228.41 tonnes.**
- According to the World Gold Council's regional CEO (India), the **RBI is among the top five central banks that are buying gold.**

- 
- **Which Other Banks are Buying Gold?**
 - **According to the World Gold Council (WGC), gold is being bought mainly by central banks of emerging market economies.**
 - **The WGC report said that in 2022, the People's Bank of China reported the first increase in its gold reserves since September 2019.**
 - **China has been historically a large buyer of gold.**

- 
- During 2022, the **central banks from the Middle East**, including Egypt, Qatar, Iraq, the UAE, and Oman **significantly boosted their gold reserves**.
 - By the end of 2022, the **Central Bank of Uzbekistan** became a net purchaser of gold, with its gold reserves rising by 34 tonnes.
 - In January-March 2023, the **Monetary Authority of Singapore** was the **largest single buyer of gold** after it added 69 tonnes to its gold reserves

- 
- Why is RBI Hoarding the Gold?
 - **Counter Strategy against Negative Interest Rate:**
 - **Good Hedge in Geopolitical Uncertainty**
 - **Diversify Forex Reserves:** Gold is a safer, more secure and **more liquid asset** and it **performs better during times of crisis**, and as a long-term store of value.
- 





36th CISO Deep-Dive
Training Programme

- The **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**, under its **Capacity Building scheme**, organised 36th **CISO Deep-Dive training programme** with 24 participants from Central Line Ministries and States/UTs at **Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi**.
- The training program is a part of a series of workshops organised under the **Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative**.

- What is Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative?
- The Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative was conceptualised with the mission to spread awareness about cyber-crime and build capacities of Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) and frontline IT officials, across all government departments.
- It was launched by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** in 2018 in cooperation with **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)** and various industry partners in India.

- What are the Other Initiatives Related to Enhancing Cyber Security?
- **Global:**
 - Budapest Convention on Cybercrime
 - Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

Sittwe Port





West Bengal

BANGLADESH

Mizoram

Indo-Myanmar border

Haora

Kolkata

Highway 129km
in Myanmar

Kaletwa

Paletwa

MYANMAR

158 km
River Kalandan

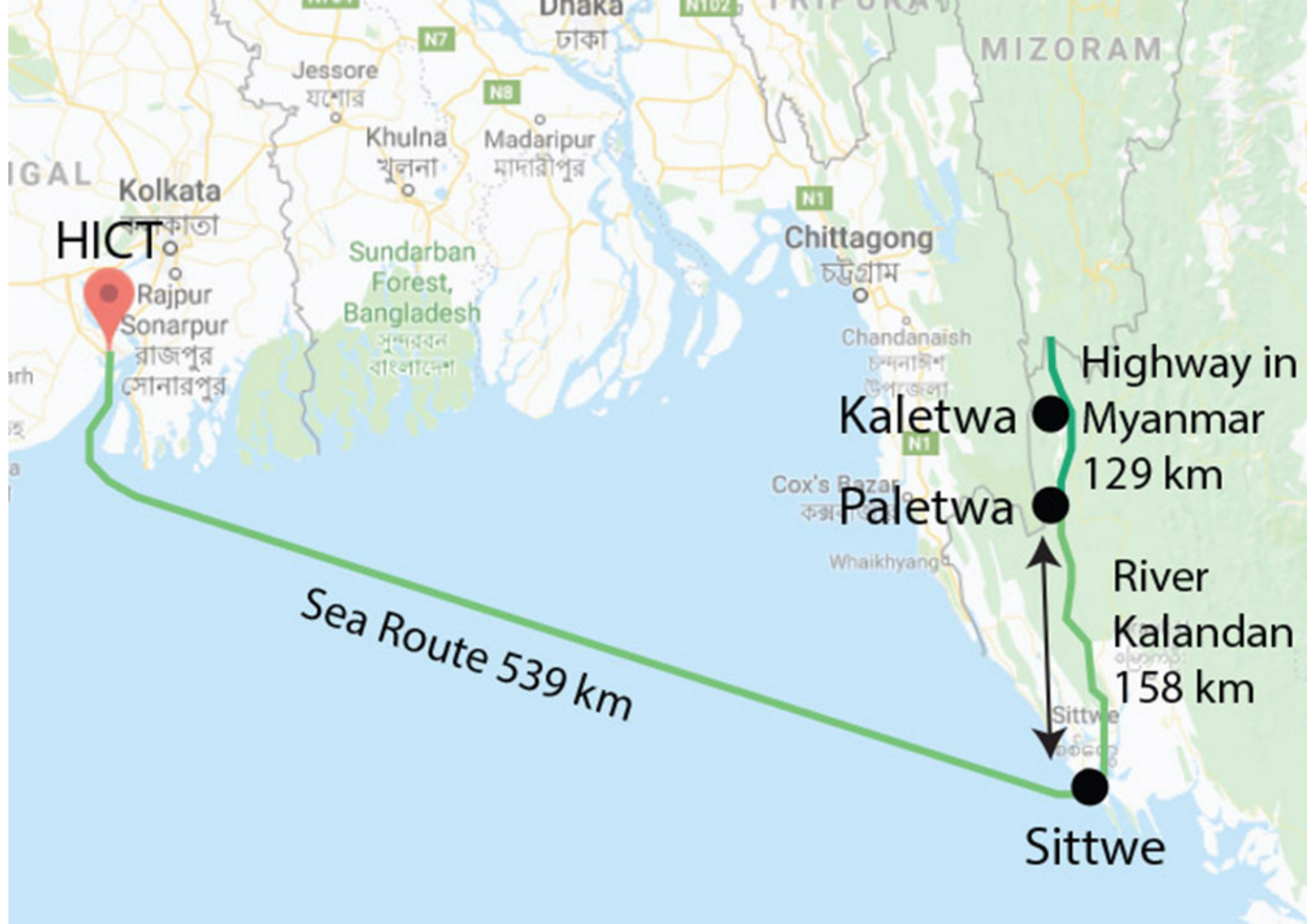
Sea route
539 km

Bay of Bengal

Sittwe

KALADAN PROJECT : MYANMAR-INDIA WATER ROUTE





- Recently, India and Myanmar jointly inaugurated the Sittwe Port in Myanmar's Rakhine State, marking an important milestone in enhancing bilateral and regional trade while also contributing to the local economy of the state.





The port's operationalization is expected to provide **greater connectivity and leads to employment opportunities**, as well as enhance growth prospects in the region.



The project aims to provide an alternative connectivity route for **Mizoram with Indian ports through the Kaladan River in Myanmar**.

- 
- An aerial photograph of a large port area, likely Haldia, showing numerous cargo ships of various sizes docked at piers and others in the water. The ships are densely packed, and the water is a deep blue-grey. The overall scene is industrial and busy.
- It includes segments such as **shipping from Haldia to Sittwe port, inland water transport from Sittwe to Paletwa via the Kaladan River, road transport from Paletwa to the Indo-Myanmar border, and further road transport to NH.54 in India.**

- The Sittwe Port is part of the **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project**, funded by the Indian government, and will play a crucial role in linking India's **East Coast to the North-eastern states** through waterways and roads.





Health and nutrition:
NITI Aayog's
Compendium on Best
Practices in Social
Sector 2023

Initiative Name	Objective	Outcome
HBNC+ (Odisha)	Reduce diarrhoea and pneumonia in infants and improve nutrition	68% of infants receiving four complete home visits in three districts
ReMiND (Uttar Pradesh)	Reduce maternal and newborn deaths by strengthening supportive supervision of ASHAs	After 2 years of ReMiND implementation, there was an increase in knowledge of pregnancy danger signs; more care-seeking and increased quality of care
Nutri Garden Initiative (ICDS, Rajasthan)	Promote nutrition security and dietary diversity through community nutrition gardens	70% of 300 malnourished children were able to fight malnutrition in the Banswara district
AMMA program (ICDS, Rajasthan)	Community-based program for managing acute malnutrition	More than 87% of children recovered during the treatment phase
Mera Baccha Abhiyan (Datia, Madhya Pradesh)	Combat malnutrition through public participation	A remarkable reduction of 17% in malnutrition rate, higher immunization rate, increased breast-feeding

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- **What is/are the purpose/purposes of Government's 'Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme' and 'Gold Monetization Scheme'? (2016)**

1. To bring the idle gold lying with Indian households into the economy.
2. To promote FDI in the gold and jewellery sector.
3. To reduce India's dependence on gold imports.

- **Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

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

सरकार की 'संप्रभु स्वर्ण बॉन्ड योजना' और 'स्वर्ण मुद्राकरण योजना' का/के उद्देश्य/उद्देश्य क्या है/हैं? (2016)

भारतीय परिवारों के पास पड़े बेकार पड़े सोने को अर्थव्यवस्था में लाना।

सोने और आभूषण क्षेत्र में एफडीआई को बढ़ावा देना।

सोने के आयात पर भारत की निर्भरता को कम करने के लिए।

नीचे दिए गए कूट का प्रयोग कर सही उत्तर चुनिए:

- (ए) केवल 1
- (बी) केवल 2 और 3
- (सी) केवल 1 और 3
- (डी) 1, 2 और 3

- **Which one of the following groups of items is included in India's foreign-exchange reserves? (2013)**

- **(a) Foreign-currency assets, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and loans from foreign countries**

- **(b) Foreign-currency assets, gold holdings of the RBI and SDRs**

- **(c) Foreign-currency assets, loans from the World Bank and SDRs**

- **(d) Foreign-currency assets, gold holdings of the RBI and loans from the World Bank**

निम्नलिखित मदों में से कौन सा समूह भारत के विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार में शामिल है? (2013)

(ए) विदेशी-मुद्रा संपत्ति, विशेष आहरण अधिकार (एसडीआर) और विदेशों से ऋण

(बी) विदेशी-मुद्रा संपत्ति, आरबीआई और एसडीआर के सोने की होल्डिंग

(सी) विदेशी-मुद्रा संपत्ति, विश्व बैंक और एसडीआर से ऋण

(d) विदेशी-मुद्रा संपत्तियां, आरबीआई की गोल्ड होल्डिंग्स और विश्व बैंक से ऋण

- **Consider the following statements in respect of the Laureus World Sports Award which was instituted in the year 2000:**
 1. American golfer Tiger Woods was the first winner of this award.
 2. The award was received mostly by 'Formula One' players so far.
 3. Roger Federer received this award maximum number of times compared to others.
- **Which of the above statements are correct?**
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

वर्ष 2000 में स्थापित लॉरियस वर्ल्ड स्पोर्ट्स अवार्ड के संबंध में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार करें:

अमेरिकी गोल्फर टाइगर वुड्स इस पुरस्कार के पहले विजेता थे।

यह पुरस्कार अब तक ज्यादातर 'फॉर्मूला वन' खिलाड़ियों द्वारा प्राप्त किया गया था।

रोजर फेडरर को यह पुरस्कार दूसरों की तुलना में सबसे अधिक बार मिला।

उपरोक्त कथनों में से कौन से सही हैं?

(ए) केवल 1 और 2

(बी) केवल 2 और 3

(सी) केवल 1 और 3

(डी) 1, 2 और 3

- **The terms 'WannaCry, Petya and EternalBlue' sometimes mentioned in the news recently are related to (2018)**
- **(a) Exoplanets**
- **(b) Cryptocurrency**
- **(c) Cyber-attacks**
- **(d) Mini satellites**


हाल ही में समाचारों में उल्लिखित शब्द 'वानाक्राई, पेट्या और इटरनलब्लू' किससे संबंधित हैं (2018)

(ए) एक्सोप्लैनेट्स

(बी) क्रिप्टोकॉरेन्सी

(सी) साइबर-हमले

(डी) मिनी उपग्रह

A group of people in a meeting room are clapping. The image is dark and moody, with a focus on the hands and arms of the participants. The background is blurred, showing a person in a white shirt and another person in a grey shirt. The overall atmosphere is one of appreciation and collaboration.

Thank you
guys, see you
at 9 am
