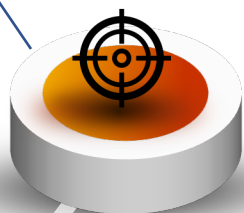


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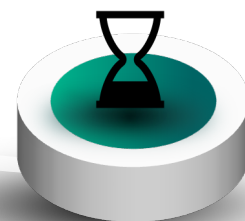
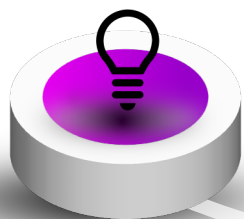


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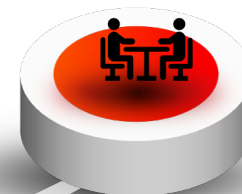


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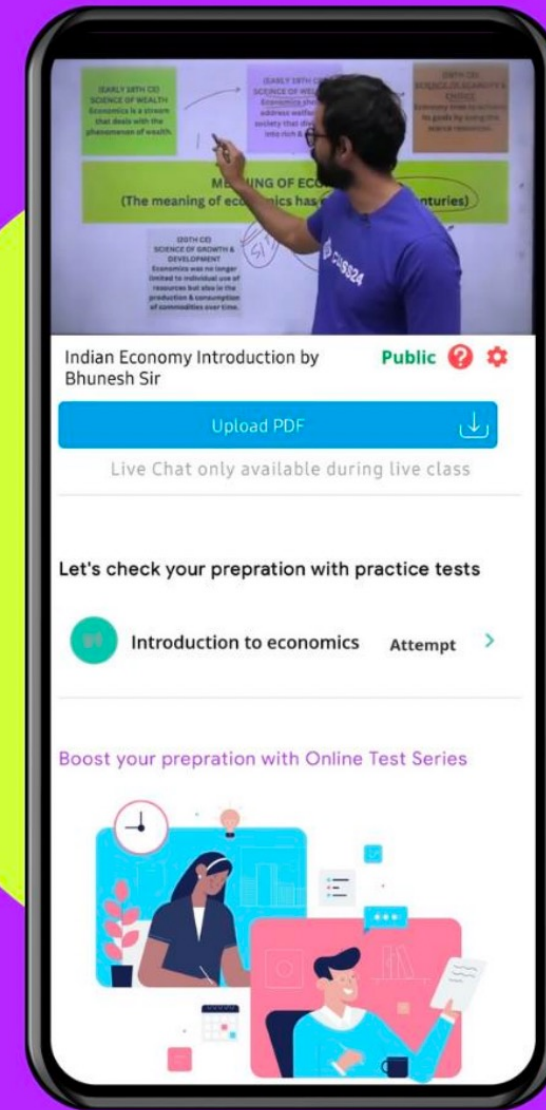
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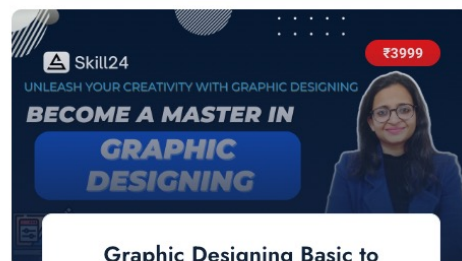
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“There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning.”

– **Jiddu Krishnamurti**

New Parliament to house sceptre that symbolised transfer of power in 1947

Vijaita Singh

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will install the *Sengol*, a sceptre given by the British to India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to represent the transfer of power in 1947, in the new Parliament building, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday.

The sceptre, kept in a museum in Prayagraj, formerly Allahabad, will be installed near the podium of the Lok Sabha Speaker.

"*Sengol* makes the spirit of August 15, 1947 unforgettable and the Parliament House is the most appropriate and sacred place to install it," Mr. Shah said. "Transfer of power is not a mere exchange of documents; it is done when the government runs according to traditions and culture. *Sengol* in the new Parliament building indicates the sentiments espoused by Nehruji in 1947."

It was originally used to mark the handing over of power from one king to another during the Chola dynasty in Tamil Nadu.

The five-foot-long intricately carved, unbending gold-plated silver sceptre, with a finial of Nandi (bull deity), was specially commissioned by the then Thiruvavaduthurai *Adheenam* (pontiff) and was handed over to Nehru.

The Thiruvavaduthurai math is located in Mayiladuthurai district of Tamil Nadu, at the heart of the erstwhile Chola kingdom.

"All 20 *Adheenam* presidents will also be present to shower blessings in reminiscence of this sacred ritual. I am glad that 96-year-old Vummidi Bangaru Chettyji, associated with its construction, will also participate," Mr. Shah said.

(With inputs from Sai Charan N. in Mayiladuthurai)

SEARCH FOR SENGOL

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How a letter to PMO set off search for *Sengol*

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

A letter to the Prime Minister's Office by dancer Padma Subrahmanyam set off meticulous research into the *Sengol* leading to the installation of the golden sceptre in the new Parliament building when it is inaugurated on May 28.

Sources in the Culture Ministry said that Dr. Subrahmanyam had quoted an article in the Tamil magazine *Thuglak* which had carried details of the ceremony in 1947.

The article had appeared in May 2021 and the dancer and researcher had requested the government to make this information public on the occasion of Independence Day that year.

This set the tone for a relook at the historical event and a Culture Ministry



Union Home Minister Amit Shah tweeted these pictures of a golden 'Sengol' to be installed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the new Parliament building on Sunday. TWITTER@AMIT SHAH

team, assisted by experts from the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), began the research into the reports.

The *Sengol* ceremony seemingly took place minutes before India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru hoisted the National Flag and made his famous "Tryst with destiny" speech on August 15, 1947. It had been kept at his Prayagraj residence-

turned-museum till now.

It was found to have been widely reported in Indian and foreign media at that time including in the *Time* magazine along with photographs.

"With the nation ravaged by Partition and violence, the ceremony had to be arranged post-haste and it not being a legal or formal matter, remained unrecorded. As a result, the sacred *Sengol* and its vest-

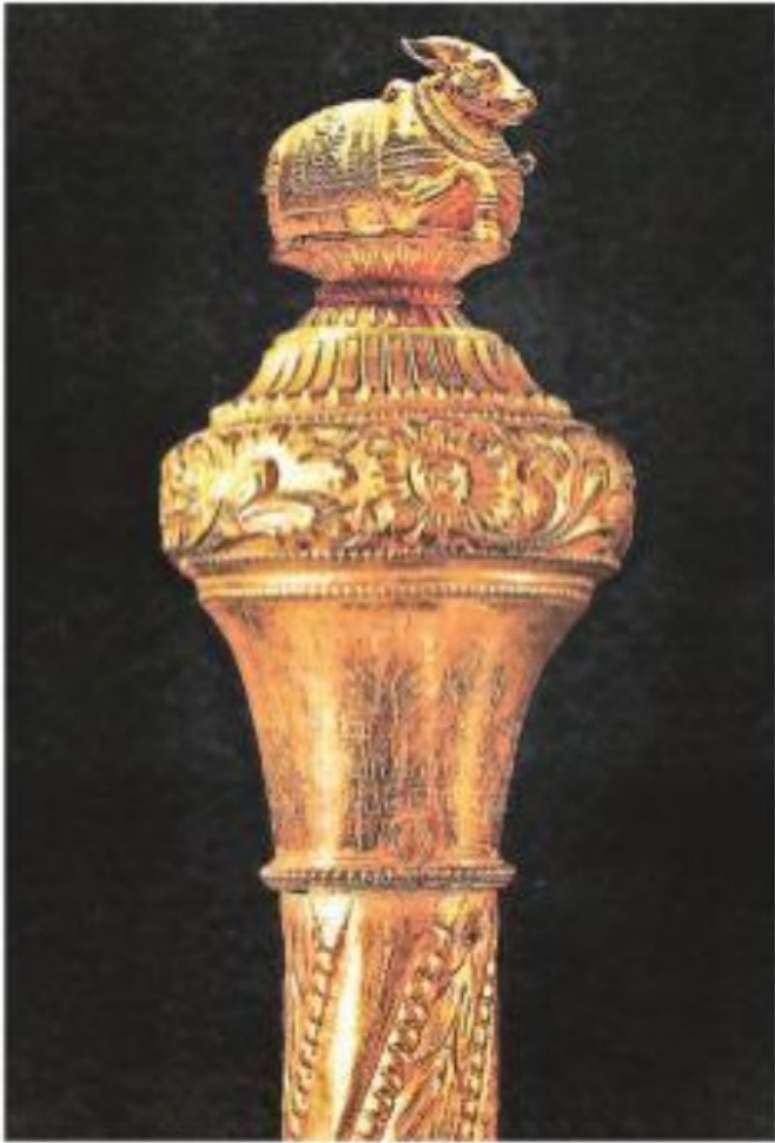
ing ceremony seem to have disappeared from the institutional memory of the Indian state," Sachidanand Joshi, Member-Secretary of the IGNCA, told *The Hindu*.

It was in 2017 that reports again began appearing in the Tamil media about how minutes before Mr. Nehru addressed the nation as the Prime Minister, the Government of India had followed the sacred *Sengol*-vesting mo-

del of Chola kings of Tamil Nadu for transfer of power from the British to Indians. The then Prime Minister had been handed over the *Sengol* with the Nandi (bull deity) finial amid the singing of the sacred Tamil text *Thevaram* – symbolic of divine blessings and command to rule justly and fairly.

They found that the golden sceptre was studded with jewels and worth ₹15,000 at that time and was made by Vummidi Bangaru Chetty and Sons, jewellers and diamond merchants of Chennai.

The Vummidi Bangaru Chetty family confirmed that they made the *Sengol*. Though the eldest member of the family who made it is over 95 years old and is unable to recollect the details, the photograph of the event is kept at their house, the sources said.



The sceptre has a Nandi bull on top,
symbolising justice.

From Page One

19 Opposition parties to boycott inauguration

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) was also approached by the Opposition bloc to join the boycott. However, according to sources, the party does not intend to sign the joint statement. "We are still discussing the issue and will take a decision tomorrow," BRS leader K. Keshav Rao said.

Mr. Modi will inaugurate the new building on Sunday. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will also be present at the function. The Opposition has argued that it is the President and not the Prime Minister who is the head of the Indian state, and also the head of Parliament.

Their statement quotes Article 79 of the Constitution which states, "There shall be a Parliament for the Union which shall consist of the President and two Houses to be known respectively as the Council of States and the House of the People." The Opposition sought to remind the government that it is the President who "summons, prorogues and addresses" the Parliament.

"In short, the Parliament cannot function without the President. Yes, the Prime Minister has decided to inaugurate the new Parliament building without her. This is a gross violation of the high office of the President, and violates the letter and spirit of the Constitution. It undermines the spirit of inclusion which saw the nation celebrate its first woman advisor President," the Opposition parties said in the statement.

Muting Opposition

The Opposition accused Mr. Modi of reluctantly bowing out of Parliament by disqualifying, suspending and muting Opposition members, and by passing several controversial legislation without any debate. It also pointed out that the new building was constructed in a "once-in-a-century" pandemic, with "no consultation with the people of India or MPs".

"When the soul of democracy has been sacked out from the Parliament, we find no value in a new building. We announced our decision to boycott the inauguration of the new Parliament building. We will continue to fight in letter, in spirit and in substance against this authoritarian Prime Minister and his government and take our message directly to the people," they said.

Miracles after the joint statement was released, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet that the Parliament is not built by "bricks of ego" but through constitutional values.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress president Nara Chandrababu Naidu, however, said his party's MPs would attend, and slammed those planning to boycott the inauguration. He also urged all parties to set aside the political differences and to attend the event.

One killed, houses torched in Manipur

The house of Manipur PWD Minister Konhthoujam Govindas in Bishnupur was vandalised on Wednesday evening by a mob, comprising mostly women, claiming that the government was not doing enough to protect locals from tribal extremists. Mr. Govindas, a BJP leader, involving about 100 people, were away when about 100 people barged into their house in the Ningthoukhong Bazar area. Officials said a group of "miscreants" on Tuesday torched some abandoned houses at Thongbi village, which is close to the boundary between the two districts and near a relief camp set up for those displaced during the recent violence.

Those affected retaliated by burning down four abandoned houses in the adjoining Gelnol village, and were then fired upon by suspected militants.

The bullets hit two people, both said to be staying at the relief camp in Bishnupur. Moirang, a town associated with Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army, while Toliang Chandramani, who had been displaced from Churachandpur's Thengra Lekha, died of injuries on the way to hospital, the other person is undergoing treatment.

The incident led to protests in parts of Imphal Valley. Reports said that a group of women belonging to the Meitei community briefly blocked an Army convoy headed toward Churachandpur on Wednesday morning.

The protesters said the Army and paramilitary forces were not taking any action against the Kuki extremists in ceasefire mode despite their alleged involvement in the violence.

Won't let anyone mar India-Australia ties: PM

Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra, in an interaction with the media, welcomed the action taken by Australian authorities against separatist elements. Mr. Kwatra said Mr. Modi had acknowledged Canberra's "correct appreciation" of the activities of separatist groups operating in Australian territory. Mr. Kwatra also said that the two leaders had discussed the need for "reform" of the UN Security Council (UNSC).

Speaking before Mr. Modi, Mr. Albanese emphasised regional and global issues. The two countries had operationalised the ICTA in December 2022, and Mr. Modi said the plan is to upgrade the discussion towards a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA).

Modi must convene talks with Meitei, tribal leaders: Cong.

The party's fact-finding team says 54,000 displaced in violence which left communities divided; calls for ₹20-lakh relief for families of victims

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi must convene talks with the Meitei and tribal communities to restore peace in Manipur, the Congress said on Wednesday after the party's fact-finding team visited the State.

Senior party leader Ajay Kumar said that extremists had taken over the narrative in the State, leaving the two communities starkly divided.

The worrying sign is that the situation has gone out of control from the politicians and the narrative has been taken over by the extremists. Now, even politicians are speaking this language. Kuki officials have left the (Imphal) valley and gone to hills and Meitei officials have left hills and gone to the valley," Mr. Kumar said at a press conference in New Delhi after the fact-finding team submitted its report.

"This has never happened in independent India. The Congress team found that as many as 54,000 people have been displaced, over 2,000 houses and 20 police stations burnt down, 200 churches damaged, and 1,000 semi-automatic weapons and 6,000 ammunition rounds stolen from training centres, Mr. Kumar said.

The fact-finding delegation, which called on the Governor, has demanded immediate rehabilitation of the victims of violence, enhanced security for villages of compensation of ₹20 lakh for the next of kin of those who died.

ED searches online gaming companies for FEMA violations

Devesh K. Pandey

NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has conducted searches against foreign-registered online gaming companies and websites at 25 locations in Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh for suspected violations under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), involving a total of ₹4,000 crore.

The agency has frozen 58 bank accounts of firms allegedly being used for gaming, and is pursuing overseas the income generated from online gaming in the guise of remittance against import of goods and services.

GDP growth expected to exceed 7% estimate in FY23, says RBI Governor

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India's GDP growth in FY22-23 may well surpass the 7% estimate, while retail inflation is likely to go below the 4.7% mark this month, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shakti Kant Das said on Wednesday.

He added that gross non-performing assets in the banking system are likely to have dipped further in the January to March 2023 quarter.

"I will not be surprised if India's GDP growth last year is lower than the 7% estimate earlier," the Governor said, noting that almost all of the 70 high-frequency indicators pointed to a sustained slowing world trade and goods exports remain a risk.

Mr. Das, who was speaking at the annual session of the Confederation of In-



Standing ground: Meitei people staging a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Wednesday. SUDHAKAR PUNDRAKAR

opened in independent India. In my police career, I have never seen this kind of separation of communities. The Congress also sought the recognised tribes in Manipur's Churachandpur, one of the worst-affected districts during the ethnic clashes broke out in the State on May 3, the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) said the tribal people of Manipur "could no longer live with the dominant Meiteis anymore".

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Manipur tribal body calls for separation of hill areas in the State

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

A tribal leaders' forum in Manipur has sought the "total separation" of the hill areas inhabited by the indigenous people, primarily those belonging to the Kuki-Chin-Zomi-Mizo group, from the State.

In a petition to former CRPF chief Kuldip Singh, appointed as the security adviser to the Manipur government soon after ethnic clashes broke out in the State on May 3, the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) said the tribal people of Manipur "could no longer live with the dominant Meiteis anymore".

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The forum also sought the resettlement or reporting of tribal employees of the State and Central governments as early as possible. The employees have not been able to report for duty in Imphal Valley.

The ITLF further sought protection against two armed radical Meitei groups — Narmam Tong and Meitei Leupun — in the border areas of the tribal habitations by neutral forces. Holding these groups responsible for the killing of tribal people and the destruction of their houses, the forum said they needed to be stopped.

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Standing ground: Meitei people staging a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Wednesday. SUDHAKAR PUNDRAKAR

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Googlies over Tripura's recognition for Ganguly

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The decision by the BJP-led government in Tripura to appoint former Indian cricket captain Sourav Ganguly as the head ambassador for the northeastern State has once again triggered a political row between the BJP and Trinamool Congress.

Leaders of the West Bengal BJP on Monday hailed the decision of the Tripura government and emphasised that it fixed a mistake made by the Trinamool government.

In October 2022, the Trinamool Congress leadership including Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee criticised the move when Mr. Ganguly was denied a second term as president of the BCCI.

The Trinamool leadership said the BJP was deliberately trying to politicise the issue.

Independence of judiciary is part of basic structure of Constitution: SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has held that the independence of the judiciary is part of the basic structure of the Constitution, and the executive and legislative branches cannot interfere with its functioning.

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sion, gratuity and other retirement benefits.

The directions were based on the recommendations made in the report of the court-appointed Second National Judicial Pay Commission headed by Justice P.V. Reddi (retired) as its chairman with senior advocate K. Ramani as its member.

Crucial role The judgment records the crucial role played by the district judiciary in the justice administration system by recording the submissions made by its amicus curiae advocate K. Ramani, that "on a single day, the district judiciary handles nearly 11.3 lakh cases".

Justice Narasimha said the district judiciary was the backbone of the judicial system vital to the judicial system is the independence of the judiciary. To ensure their impartiality, it is important to ensure their financial security and economic independence," the top court noted.

"The judgment highlighted the doctrine that the judiciary must perform the inherent power to compel payment of those mandated money which are reasonable and necessary to carry out its mandated responsibilities".

"This doctrine is only the logical conclusion of separation of powers and ensures that the independence of the judiciary is secured," the court said.

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The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has held that the independence of district judiciary is part of the basic structure of the Constitution and judicial independence from the executive and the legislature requires the judiciary to have a say in matters of finances.

“The independence of the district judiciary must also be equally a part of the basic structure of the Constitution. Without impartial and independent judges in the district judiciary, justice, a preambular goal, would remain illusory. The district judiciary is, in most cases, also the court which is most accessible to the litigant,” a three-judge



Judiciary must possess the power to compel payment of money which is necessary to carry out its mandated responsibilities

SUPREME COURT

Bench of Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, Justices V. Ramasubramanian and P.S. Narasimha observed in a judgment.

The judgment, based on a petition filed by the All India Judges Association, gave a series of directions to amend the service rules of the district judiciary and for payment of arrears of pension, additional pen-

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the district judiciary was the backbone of the judicial system. “Vital to the judicial system is the independence of the judicial officers. To secure their impartiality, it is important to ensure their financial security and economic independence,” the top court noted.

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Evolution of Basic Structure Doctrine

Shankari Prasad
Case 1951
Sajjan Singh case
1965

Absolute power to
parliament in
amending
Constitution

Golaknath case
1967

Enacting of 24th
amendment act

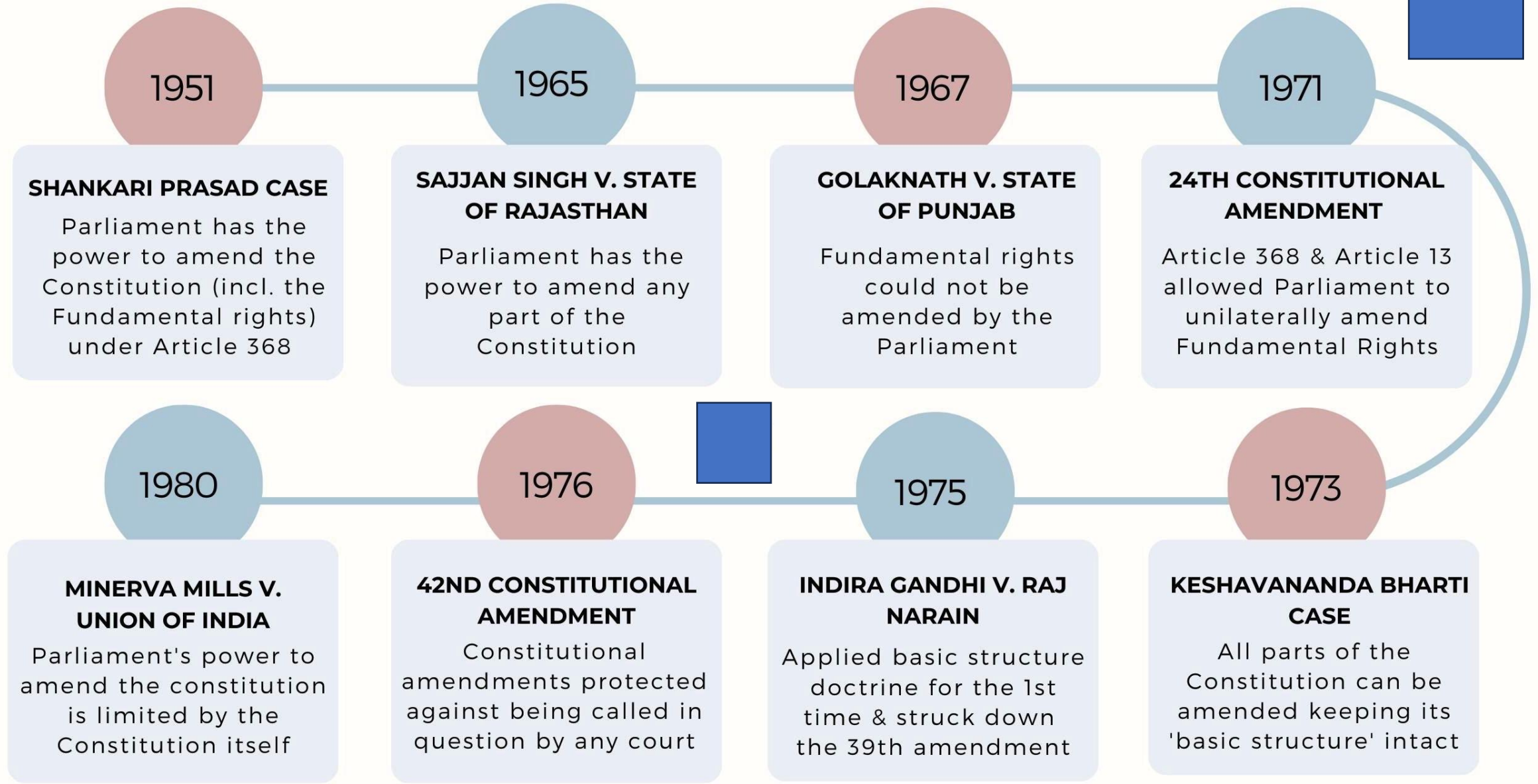
Kesavananda
Bharati case 1973

New Doctrines of
basic structure

Indira Nehru
Gandhi case 1975

Reaffirmation of
the Doctrine of
basic structure

EVOLUTION OF BASIC STRUCTURE DOCTRINE



Elements of the Basic Structure.

- Supremacy of the Constitution.
- Sovereign, democratic & republican nature of the Indian Polity.
- Secular Character of the Constitution.
- Separation of Powers between the Leg, exec & Judiciary.
- Federal Character of the Constitution.
- Unity & integrity of the Nation.
- Welfare State (socio-economic justice).
- Judicial Review.
- Freedom & dignity of individual.
- Parliamentary System.
- Rule of Law.
- Harmony & balance between Fund Rts & DPSP.
- Principle of Equality.
- Free & fair elections

IN BRIEF



INSV Tarini returns to Goa after 188-day voyage

Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini with a six-member crew entered Goa harbour on Tuesday, reaching India after successfully completing a 17,000 NM (nautical mile) trans-ocean inter-continental voyage after 188 days. The crew of six women was received at the jetty by Chief Minister of Goa Pramod Sawant, Union Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani, and Navy chief Admiral R. Hari Kumar. Admiral Kumar said that the voyage is not an end in itself, but the start of a new phase of providing an ocean of opportunities for women sailors to conquer the seven seas.

Uttarakhand, northeast to get Vande Bharat trains

Uttarakhand and the northeastern region will have their first Vande Bharat trains flagged off in the last week of May. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually flag off the Delhi-Delhrad-Vande Bharat train on Thursday, and bookings for passengers will likely be accepted from May 29. While the Delhrad-Jaunpur-Jaunpur traverses a distance of 305 km in five hours and 50 minutes, it is being claimed that the Vande Bharat will cut travel time by at least an hour. Another Vande Bharat train between Guwahati in Assam to New Jalpaiguri in West Bengal is also to be flagged off on May 29. The 400-km distance between Guwahati and New Jalpaiguri is currently covered in six hours by Rajdhani Express.

HC directs status quo on Dahod mosque demolition

The Gujarat High Court has directed local authorities in Dahod district to maintain status quo on the land where the local municipality razed a decades-old Nagina mosque on May 20. The directive came on a petition filed by the Nagina Mosque Trust, which submitted that the mosque and its adjacent structures were demolished without notice. The trust submitted that the mosque and its compound, where some shops were built and given on rent, were all Wakf property and could not be demolished by the civic body. The court has directed the parties to maintain status quo and issued a notice returnable by June 8.

Assam, Meghalaya start talks on boundary disputes

The Chief Ministers of Assam and Meghalaya on Wednesday initiated the second phase of talks to resolve disputes in the six remaining sectors along the 884.9-km border that they share. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Meghalaya counterpart, Conrad K. Sangma, signed an agreement on March 29, 2022, in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to formally end the dispute in six sectors. Dr. Sarma said the regional committees of both states would start visiting the six other sectors and submit their reports by July-end after which a Chief Minister-level review meeting will be held.

Satyajit Ray's kin welcome court order on copyright

Press Trust of India
KOLKATA

The family of Satyajit Ray on Wednesday hailed the Delhi High Court order recognising the film maestro as the first copyright owner for his film *Nayak* as "welcome development" in the field of rights over creative content.

Ray's filmmaker-son Sandip Ray said that he considered the verdict a vindication of his father's right over his own creative content. "The court's order is a welcome development," he said.

The order, he said, would help in bolstering the creative right of a filmmaker or a writer on his/her works and help in resolving future disputes.

Ray, a master storyteller, had written and directed the 1966 Bengali film, which was produced by R.D. Banisal.

Justice C. Hari Shankar of the Delhi High Court, in his order on Tuesday, said Ray was the first owner of the copyright to the screenplay and the right to novelise it is also vested in him.

The later conferment of this right by his son and the "novelisation" of the film's producer Banisal that the copyright of the film as well as the screen play belonged to them and said they had no right to injunct the "novelisation of the screenplay" by third parties.

India set to triple speed of its fastest supercomputers

Processing power to such a degree eases complex mathematical calculations required for accurate weather forecasting

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

India is set to dramatically scale up its supercomputing prowess and install an 18-petaflop system over the course of this year, Earth Sciences Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Wednesday.

Flops (floating point operations per second) are an indicator of processing speed of computers and a petaflop refers to a 1,000-trillion flops. Processing power to such a degree greatly eases complex mathematical calculations required for accurate weather forecasting.

Things, forecasting how the weather will be over the next few days all the way up to two or three months ahead.

Currently India's most powerful, civilian supercomputers — Pratyush, are housed at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune. MoES, said at an event on Wednesday when Mr. Rijiju visited the NCMRWF. "Mr. Ravi-chandran said: "With the new system, we can improve resolution to 636 km." This translates to greater clarity and more accurate local forecast. "The goal is eventually to be able to represent an area by 1 km-square grids and that can be used to warn of drought and such rapidly evolving weather systems," he added.

The fastest high-performance computing system in the world is currently the Frontier-Cray system at Oakridge National Laboratory, United States. This has a peak speed of one exaflop (or about 1,000 petaflops).

The top 10 other systems, based on speed, range from about 400 petaflops to 60 petaflops.



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Netflix goes against practice, streams censored Bheed

Arcon Deep
NEW DELHI

Netflix has released a censored version of Anubhav Sinha's film *Bheed*, going against its usual practice of streaming uncut versions of films it acquires from Indian producers. The film's teaser had lured right-leaning commentators close to the government, as it featured a voice-over of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and a line of dialogue comparing the chaos of the COVID-19 migrant crisis to Partition.

Following the push-back, the film's producers had put out a fresh cut of the teaser, without Mr. Modi's voice and the Partition reference.

Two spokespersons for Netflix India were unavailable for comment; a third did not respond to *The Hindu's* queries at this time. Mr. Sinha, the film's director, also did not respond to a query.

CBCRC recommendation The film's producers did not push back, at least publicly, on the long list of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) for censoring cuts of films for release. The cuts included dropping all instances of seven swear words, reducing visuals of Oakridge National Laboratory, United States. This has a peak speed of one exaflop (or about 1,000 petaflops).

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This is the cut that Netflix has now uploaded,



Rajkumar Rao in a promotional still from *Bheed*.

scrubbing the film clean of all associations with the government.

As the government has not objected to uncensored cuts of films on streaming services — the legal regime for OTT streaming services is, at least on paper, far more liberal than for theatres and television. Some, such as Disney+ Hotstar, do not take this risk, and routinely put out censored cuts of films.

However, Netflix generally puts out uncensored versions, with new films such as *Dusara* and *Virupaksha* coming out intact. ZEE5 recently put out an uncensored and extended version of the Tamil film *Viduthala*.

However, even Netflix, which has a better record on preserving films' original forms online, hesitates when it comes to angering the Union government and its supporters.

For instance, while the company generally put out uncensored version of Hollywood films, it did not do so in the case of *Minister* and *Impossible: Fallout*, which featured a map of Jammu and Kashmir with borders that the Indian government objects to.

Global body keeps NHRC waiting over 'political meddling'

Ishtia Mishra
NEW DELHI

For the second time in a decade, the UN-recruited Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) deferred the accreditation of the National Human Rights Commission, India (NHRC-India) citing objections such as political interference in appointments, involving the police in probe, and the

The GANHRI's letter to the NHRC also cited lack of diversity in staff and leadership, and insufficient action to protect marginal-

ised groups, as reasons for the deferral of the accreditation.

The move comes two months after seven human rights watchers/institutions wrote to GANHRI objecting to NHRC India's 'A' rank. They also raised concerns regarding the NHRC's lack of independence, pluralism, diversity and accountability that are contrary to the United Nations principles on the status of national institutions (the "Paris Principles").

The NHRC has repeatedly failed to deliver its mandate, in particular to protect the rights of people from marginalised communities, religious minor-

National Human Rights Commission says process of re-accreditation is on

ties, and human rights defenders," the letter said.

Paris Principles The Paris Principles set out six main criteria: mandate and competence; autonomy; independence guaranteed by a statute or constitutional provision; pluralism; resources; and adequate powers of investigation.

The NHRC has been set up under the Protection of Human Rights

Act, passed by Parliament in 1993. It has been accredited as an 'A' Status NHRI since the beginning of the accreditation process for NHRI in 1999, which it retained in 2006, 2011 and 2017.

A letter, written by Amnesty International, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Front Line Defenders, Human Rights Watch, International Commission of Jurists, International Federation for Human Rights, and Reprieve Against Torture to GANHRI, maintained that since 2017, the NHRC has been set up under the Protection of Human Rights

Act, passed by Parliament in 1993. It has been accredited as an 'A' Status NHRI since the beginning of the accreditation process for NHRI in 1999, which it retained in 2006, 2011 and 2017.

GANHRI, the functioning of the commission had further regressed, undermining its independence.

Responding to *The Hindu*, the NHRC-India said that GANHRI, through the sub-committee on accreditation, is responsible for reviewing and accrediting NHRI in compliance with the Paris Principles every five years. As part of the process, its review was due in March 2023 for re-accreditation, which has been deferred for a year.

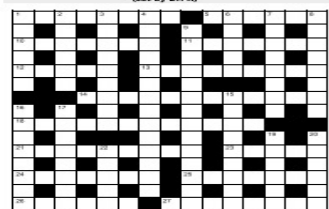
The NHRC said that the deferral is an action of the sub-committee and not a recommendation on the

accreditation status of the NHRC, India. It added that throughout the deferred period, the NHRC, India retains its 'A' Status and associated privileges.

India's top human rights body also said that the process of re-accreditation has not concluded and the sub-committee has recommended advocating with the government and MPs for certain legislative amendments in 2023 for re-accreditation, which has been deferred for a year.

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TH CROSSWORD 13874



- Across
- 1, 7 Love of nature never changes - start to behave responsibly (4,1,3,4)
 - 4 A musical instrument's note (LS)
 - 10 Finest girl wanting hot, stylish clothes (7)
 - 13 Most foul-smelling tanker possibly contains sulphur (7)
 - 12 Mother discarding spade coin (8)

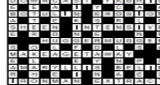
To solve this puzzle online, get access to our crossword site at: <https://qrgo.page.link/jpTn>

- Down
- 13 Guy perishes, having primarily broken many bones (8)
 - 14 Duty act as busy mares struggle in emergency room (9,6)
 - 16 Rationalists release pigs about houses at inauguration (12)
 - 23 Consuming cool soft drink with starter of tasty American savoury (8)
 - 25 Event in 60 minutes, leaving hotel to get bouquet (5)
 - 26 Goleen, say, from a round shaft in sanctuary (4,3)
 - 28 European, one with surburban feeling back pain (7)
 - 29 Did this and rose to catch fish (9)
 - 31 Petulant youngster finally restrained by woman's command (8)
 - 32 Mexican dish by mother in American city (6)
 - 3 Criticised star, so intoxicated (6)
 - 5 Egg with slice of bacon, helper's attentive (6)
 - 4 Old CIA document discovered about member banished from church (1,6)
 - 6 Succeeded in aim to conquer mountain (5)
 - 7 See 1 Across
 - 9 Dringled a dispute perhaps (3,5)
 - 9 Finish drink rum, filled with desire to consume a lot of alcohol (5,4,1,6)
 - 15 Long, narrow beer glass ordered for a lady by Earl (4,2,3)
 - 16 Clobbered fool for consuming cocaine, becoming indecent in America (13,5)
 - 17 Kill revelling rodents interrupting meeting (8)
 - 19 Gold coins of Roman empire auctioned around lunchtime at Italy (8)
 - 20 Champion saves series with century in test (8)
 - 22 Old bar in Polish city (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



FAITH

Lakshmi, Lord's own nectar

In his Sundarabharata stava, sloka four, Kooratashvan asserts that Lord Narayana has concern and affection for those who do sarangati, said P.B. Rajahamsam, in a discourse. In this sloka, Kooratashvan refers to the churning of the Milky Ocean by the Lord, where He used the Mandara mountain as the churning rod. Many things emanated from this ocean, and He gave away everything to those assembled there. However, Mahalakshmi, who also emerged from the ocean, went of Her own accord toward His chest, and made that Her permanent residence. The devas were interested in amrita, which came from the ocean. Amrita could confer immortality on the devas. But the Lord was more interested in another nectar that also came from the ocean, and that was Lakshmi. This nectar was entirely His, and was far superior to everything else.

Kooratashvan describes the dense forests, which cover the mountain. Here one finds the influence of pasuams of Ashvins in Kooratashvan's ideas. Kooratashvan speaks of the Moon that moves among the peaks of the mountain. The inspiration is clearly Thirumangal Ashvins' pasturam where the Ashvins talk of the Moon as crawling between the peaks. The mountain slopes are so densely forested that it seems as if the mountains themselves are green in colour, as they reach up to the sky. Such is the illusion created by the thick canopy of trees. The celestial maidens like Rambha and Urvashi flock to Thirumalarchuncholi to have darshan of Lord Sundarabharata. They want to adorn themselves with urdvaha pundra before they go to the sacred shrine. They use the moon as a mirror for this purpose, says Kooratashvan.

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Processing power to such a degree eases complex mathematical calculations required for accurate weather forecasting

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

India is set to dramatically scale up its supercomputing prowess and install an 18-petaflop system over the course of this year, Earth Sciences Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Wednesday.

Flops (floating point operations per second) are an indicator of processing speed of computers and a petaflop refers to a 1,000 trillion flops. Processing power to such a degree greatly eases complex mathematical calculations required, for, among other things, forecasting how the weather will be over the next few days all the way up to two or three months ahead.



Pratyush, one of India's most powerful civilian supercomputers, is housed at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune.

MoES, said at an event on Wednesday when Mr. Rijiju visited the NCMRWF. This was Mr. Rijiju's first official visit to an MoES institution since taking charge as MoES Minister on May 18.

us to map weather and climate changes to a resolution of 12X12 km," Mr. Ravichandran said. "With the new system, we can improve resolution to 6X6 km." This translates to greater clarity and more ac-

Currently India's most powerful, civilian supercomputers – Pratyush and Mihir – with a combined capacity of 6.8 petaflops are housed at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, and the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), Noida, respectively. They were made operational in 2018 at an investment of ₹438 crore. Both these organisations are affiliated to the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

The new supercomputers too will be housed at the two institutes, M. Ravichandran, Secretary,

Imported from France

The new supercomputers, yet to be named, are imported from French corporation, ATOS – an information technology service and consulting company. The Narendra Modi government had signed a deal in December 2018 with France to procure high-performance computers worth ₹4,500 crore by 2025.

The new MoES computers are likely to cost ₹900 crore.

"Every four or five years systems have to be upgraded. Our current high-performance computers allow

curate local forecast. "The goal is eventually to be able to represent an area by 1 km-square grids and that can be used to warn of cloudburst and such rapidly evolving weather systems," he added.

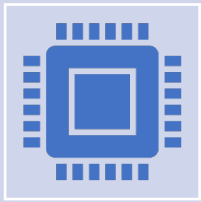
The fastest high-performance computing system in the world is currently the Frontier-Cray system at Oakridge National Laboratory, United States. This has a peak speed of one exa-flop (or about 1,000 petaflops).

The top 10 other systems, based on speed, range from about 400 petaflops to 60 petaflops.

- With a total of 6.8 petaFLOPS, India now has two fastest supercomputers: Mihir and Pratyush. While the National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecast, Noida, introduced Mihir, the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, introduced Pratyush.
- Mihir and Pratyush are used for the following tasks:
 - Fishing
 - Air Quality
 - Forecasting the weather
 - Detecting natural disasters



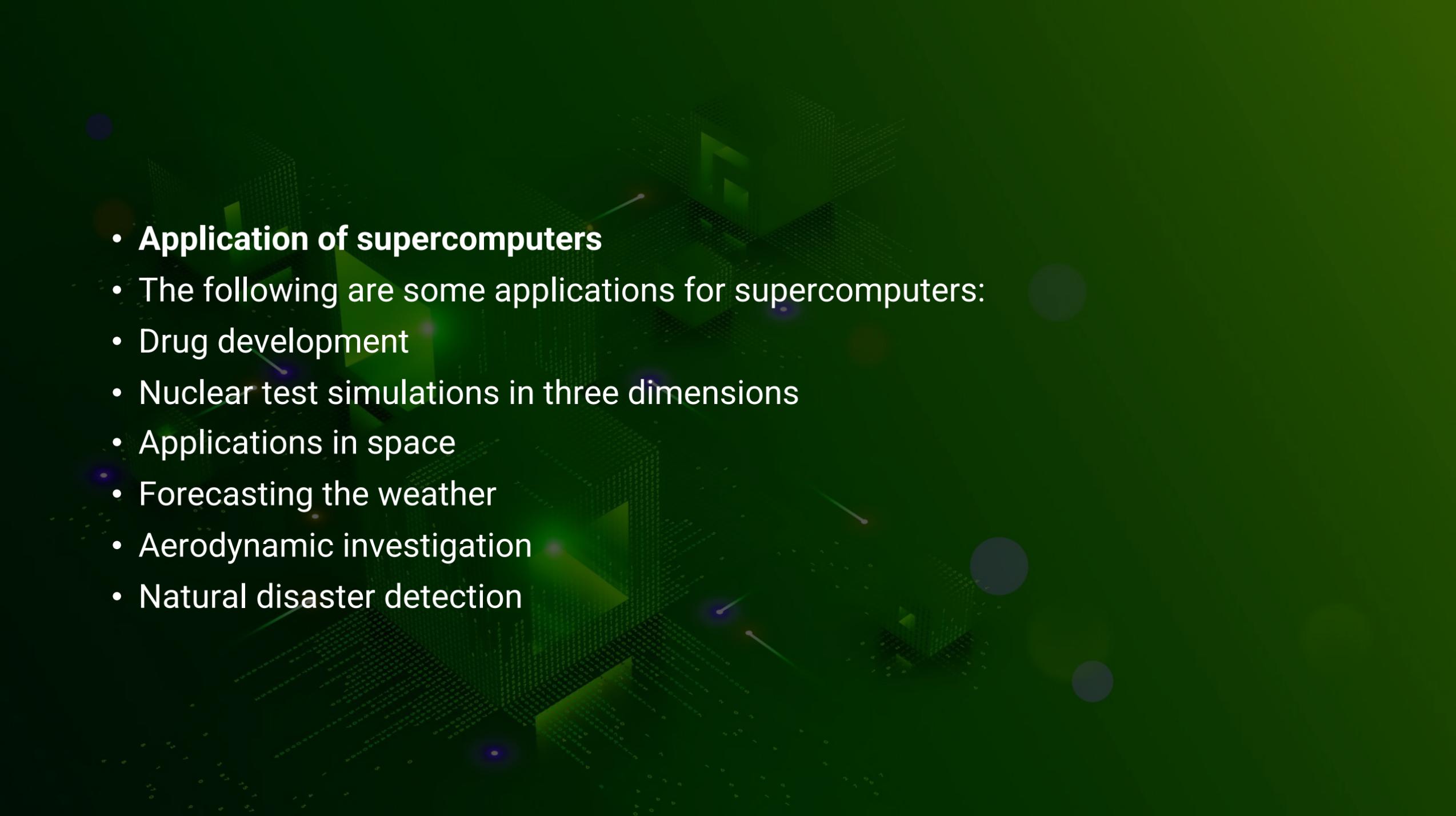
India's first supercomputer



While India was having problems with [supercomputers](#) in the 1980s, the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing was established. In 1991, C-DAC released the PARAM 8000 supercomputer, which had a speed of 1 Giga flop. India's first supercomputer was the PARAM 8000. PARAM stands for Parallel Machine.



The C-DAC followed PARAM 8000 with PARAM 8600. The C-DAC launched PARAM 9000 and PARAM Padma with teraflops ranges as part of its second and third missions.



- **Application of supercomputers**

- The following are some applications for supercomputers:

- Drug development
- Nuclear test simulations in three dimensions
- Applications in space
- Forecasting the weather
- Aerodynamic investigation
- Natural disaster detection

The National Supercomputing Mission's first three supercomputers were installed in the following locations:

Param Shakti, a supercomputer at [IIT Kharagpur](#) with a performance of 650 teraFLOPS.

Param Shivay, a supercomputer at IIT BHU, has a performance of 1 PetaFLOPS.

IITM Param Brahma, a supercomputer with a speed of 650 teraFLOPS, was built in Pune.

WASHINGTON

Indian-origin man arrested after crashing truck near White House



REUTERS

An Indian-origin man who crashed a U-Haul truck containing a Nazi flag near the White House has been arrested and charged with trying to kill or harm the U.S. President. Sai Varshith Handula, 35, from Missouri, drove into the bollards outside Lafayette Park just before 10 p.m. on Monday, the police said. No one was injured. **AP**

KYIV

More than 20,000 men died in Bakhmut battle, says Wagner chief



AP

The head of the Russian private Army Wagner has again broken with the Kremlin line on Ukraine, saying its goal of demilitarising the country has backfired, acknowledging Russian troops have killed civilians and alongside with Western estimates that he's lost more than 20,000 men in the battle for Bakhmut. **AP**

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan govt. mulling possible ban on Imran's PTI party, says Minister



REUTERS

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said the government is mulling a possible ban on Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party following the attacks by its supporters on military offices after the former prime minister's arrest. He, however, said that the matter will be referred to the Parliament for approval. **PTI**

NEW YORK

Tina Turner, voice behind *What's Love Got to Do With It*, dead at 83



AP

Tina Turner, the unstoppable singer and stage performer who teamed with husband Ike Turner for a dynamic run of hit records and live shows in the 1960s and '70s and survived her horrifying marriage to triumph in the middle age with the chart-topping *What's Love Got to Do With It*, has died at 83. **AP**

China appoints new envoy to U.S. in sign of thaw in ties

'I have come here to enhance China-U.S. exchanges and cooperation, and I take this as my important mission,' veteran diplomat Xie Feng tells reporters after arriving in Washington

Ananth Krishnan

China's new Ambassador to the U.S. finally landed in Washington on Tuesday, filling a post that unusually remained vacant for close to five months and heralding what some observers see as a possible sign of a limited thaw in recently frosty relations.

Veteran diplomat Xie Feng, who has spent much of his career dealing with the U.S., told reporters after landing in Washington that he had "come here to enhance China-U.S. exchanges and cooperation, and I take this as my important mission". He also added that "as a representative of the Chinese people, I have come here to safeguard the interests of China, and I take this as my sacred responsibility". Mr. Xie succeeds Qin Gang, who was promoted as China's Foreign Minister, after a close to five month gap, leaving a key post vacant during tense relations. Beijing is also yet to ap-



New innings: Xie Feng speaks to the media upon his arrival at the John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York on Tuesday. **AP**

point a new Ambassador to New Delhi for almost seven months, another unusually long gap amid a continuing chill in ties. The foreign envoy, Sun Weidong, left his post in October and took over as a Vice Foreign Minister in Beijing. It is understood that Beijing at this month had not yet proposed the name of a successor to New Delhi. The new U.S. envoy, Mr. Xie, noted that "at present, the China-U.S. relations are faced with serious difficulties and challenges" and referring to President Xi Jinping's "three principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation", said China "hopes that the U.S. will make the same decision with China, and act in the common interests of the two peoples and the world, properly handling important and sensitive issues, such as the Taiwan question... so as to bring China-U.S. relations back to the right track". U.S. President Joe Biden last week said a thaw in recently strained relations could be possible "very shortly", speaking after the G-7 Summit in Japan which

saw the grouping take a united stand against what they called "Chinese economic coercion, sparking a sharp response from Beijing. The Chinese Foreign Ministry on Monday took a dim view of Mr. Biden's comment, questioning U.S. "sincerity".

Resuming visits Both sides have, however, been in talks over resuming high-level visits. A blueprint agreed by Mr. Biden and Mr. Xi following their meeting in Bali in November laid out a plan to boost relations, but tensions over the Chinese "grey balloon" incident led to Secretary of State Antony Blinken calling off a visit that was part of that plan.

National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Chinese Politburo member Wang Yi met two days of talks in Vienna earlier this month, part of what was described as "ongoing efforts to maintain open channels of communication and responsibly manage competition".

Ron DeSantis launches U.S. presidential campaign; to challenge Trump in primaries

Associated Press

MELO

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis entered the 2024 U.S. presidential race on Wednesday, stepping into a crowded Republican primary contest that will see both his national appeal as a cultural conservative firebrand and the GOP's willingness to move on from former President Donald Trump.



Ron DeSantis

It marks a new chapter in his extraordinary rise from little-known congressman to a leading figure in the nation's bitterest over race, gender, abortion, and other divisive issues. Mr. DeSantis is consistently one of Mr. Trump's strongest Republican rival even as the Governor faces questions about his readiness for the national stage. Mr. DeSantis' audio-on-

ly announcement was to be streamed on Twitter Space beginning at 6 p.m. EDT (3.30 GMT). He was following up with prime-time appearances on conservative programs, including Fox News and Mark Levin's radio show. Mr. DeSantis' entry into the Republican field has been rumoured for months and he is considered one of the party's strongest candidates in the quest to retake the White House from Democratic President Joe Biden. The 80-year-old incumbent, Republicans say, has pushed the nation too far left. The Republican nominee will face Mr. Biden on

the general election ballot in November 2024.

Mr. DeSantis begins his campaign in a top-tier of two alongside Mr. Trump based on early public poll-polling, fundraising and campaign infrastructure.

Mr. DeSantis, who likely would not have become the Florida Governor without Mr. Trump's endorsement, has adopted the former President's fiery personality, his populist policies and even some of his rhetoric and mannerisms. Yet Mr. DeSantis has one thing Mr. Trump does not: a credible claim that he may be more electable in a general election than Mr. Trump, who faces multiple legal threats and presided over Republican losses in three consecutive national elections.

Aware of Mr. DeSantis' draw, Mr. Trump has been almost singularly focused on undermining Mr. DeSantis' political appeal for months. Mr. Trump and his team believe that Mr. DeSantis may be Mr. Trump's only legitimate threat for the nomination.



Bulgarian writer wins International Booker Prize

Associated Press

LONDON

Bulgarian writer Georgi Gospodinov and translator Angela Rodel won the International Booker Prize on Tuesday for *Time Shelter*, a darkly comic novel about the dangerous appeal of nostalgia.

The book beat five other finalists to the prize, which recognises fiction from around the world that has been translated into English. *Time Shelter* imagines a clinic that recreates the past with each floor reproducing a different decade. It is intended as a way to help people with dementia unlock their memories. It soon became a magnet for people eager to escape the modern world.

'Remember our history, recognise our labour,' say Sri Lanka's Malayaha Tamils

Meera Sriyanivasan

COLOMBO

Marking 200 years since their arrival in Sri Lanka from southern India, to work in the British-run plantations, members of the island nation's historically marginalised Malayaha Tamil community have sought greater recognition, political rights, and improved living and working conditions.



Overlooked lot: Estate workers from Sri Lanka's Malayaha Tamil group earn precious foreign exchange for the country. FILE PHOTO

"Design, resource, and implement a 10-year development plan that is explicitly based on the principle of affirmative action in response to the decades of structural exclusion that has resulted in poor human development indices of [the] Malayaha Tamil community when compared with all other communities," a key demand read in a declaration released after a recent three-day public event held in the central Nuwara Eliya city.

The development plan must aim to reduce poverty, provide land and housing, enhance public health and education access, while ensuring labour rights, including fair living wage and legal protection, the declaration said. Further, it asked the Sri Lankan government to recognise the Malayaha Ta-

mils as a community with "a distinct identity and as equal citizens", and ensure appropriate political power to sharing and proportionate system of electoral arrangements.

Incessant injustices Organised by the Institute of Social Development, an NGO working on addressing challenges facing the Malayaha Tamil, the event sought to highlight the centuries-long struggle of the much-neglected community, while demanding long-pending solutions to their enduring problems. From being deprived of their citizenship in 1948, the struggle for citizenship continued until 2003 - to being subjected to discrimination and exploitation, the community has been enduring incessant injustices. Around 1.5 lakh people from the million-strong community currently work in tea and rubber estates, bringing in crucial foreign exchange to Sri Lanka. A majority works outside the plantation ecosystem, including as professionals across sectors. The estate-bound families, living in the Central, Southern and Uva provinces, are among Sri Lanka's poorest, with some still residing in colonial-era line houses without basic amenities. India committed financial assistance to build 14,000 houses in the estate areas, but the slow pace of the project has come under frequent criticism. Along with Sri Lankan legislators, scholars, workers, artists and activists from the Malayaha Tamil community, popular Tamil rapper Arivu, of Enjoy Jaanmi fame participated and performed at last weekend's event.

ODISHA STATE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD (OSAMB)
(A Statutory Organization of Govt. of Odisha)
Plot No.1590 (P), Baranunda, Post-Khandagiri, Near Indian Oil Petrol Pump, Bhubaneswar.
Ph.No.8674-2952419, Email: osambboard99@yahoo.com
Website: osambboard.org

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR APPOINTMENT OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PARTNER (S)
Date: 23.05.2023
Ref: OSMCT-109/2023-24

OSAMB invites Request for Proposal (RFP) for Appointment of Strategic Management Partner (S).

The RFP documents covering the details of information, eligibility criteria, selection process & other terms & conditions to be downloaded from <https://osamb.odisha.gov.in> from 25.05.2023. The last date for submitting the RFP documents along with processing fees of Rs. 11,000/- (Rupees Eleven Thousand Eight hundred) only in shape of DD in favour of "OSAMB" payable at Bhubaneswar through rpd / speed post is **19.06.2023 by 5.00 P.M.** The technical bids will be opened on **22.06.2023 at 11.30 A.M.** The 31.30 A.M. The Authority reserves the right to reject any / all proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

General Manager
OSAMB Board, Bhubaneswar
E-mail: osambboard99@yahoo.com

ODISHA CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED
BHUBANESWAR, ODISHA, PIN-751012, Tel No.(0674) 2562200.
E-Mail: osccboard@odishaconstruction.com
GSTIN: 29AAC05579023W

Notice Inviting Tender for Construction of 24 (two four) On-line tender is invited for the following work on EPC-Turn Key Basis:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Est. Value of Work (Rs. in Crores)	Est. Security Deposit (Rs. in Crores)	Period of Work (Months)	Availability of Work (Months)	Subcontract (Yes/No)
01	Construction of distribution system for Odisha PCCS Marketing Company (PCCS) at Bhubaneswar. The work includes: 1. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 2. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 3. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 4. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 5. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 6. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 7. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 8. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 9. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 10. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 11. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 12. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 13. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 14. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 15. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 16. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 17. Construction of 11KV/0.4KV Distribution System. 18. 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Bulgarian writer wins International Booker Prize

Associated Press

LONDON

Bulgarian writer Georgi Gospodinov and translator Angela Rodel won the International Booker Prize on Tuesday for *Time Shelter*, a darkly comic novel about the dangerous appeal of nostalgia.

The book beat five other finalists to the prize, which recognises fiction from around the world that has been translated into English.

peak of nostalgia.

The book beat five other finalists to the prize, which recognises fiction from around the world that has been translated into English.

Time Shelter imagines a clinic that recreates the past, with each floor reproducing a different decade. Intended as a way to help people with dementia unlock their memories, it soon becomes a magnet for people eager to escape the modern world.

International Booker Prize



Inaugural winner [Ismail Kadare](#)

Awarded for Best book in English or in English translation

Country United Kingdom

Presented by [Booker Prize Foundation](#)

Reward(s) £50,000

First awarded 2005; 18 years ago

Website [thebookerprize.com](#)

ENCOUNTERS are a "very small part of the state government's overall strategy" that includes zero tolerance against criminals and operational autonomy to the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

epaper.indianexpress.com

In his penultimate attempt, Delhi Police head constable clears UPSC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MAY 24

DELHI POLICE head constable Ram Bhajan Kumar (34) became one of the 933 candidates who cleared the UPSC exam Tuesday. Son of a dailywage labourer in Rajasthan, Ram is the first from his family to have a graduate degree and he cleared the exam in his eighth attempt, with a rank of 667.

"I was surprised when I saw the results. This was my second last attempt. My father cried... I think I did too," said Ram, who is posted at a cyber cell police sta-

tion in the South district.

He is preparing for another attempt to improve his marks. The prelims exam will be held on May 28. "I never lost hope... I knew this will change my life and I can achieve all my dreams," he said.

Ram lives with his wife in Delhi. He said his wife has always been supportive and his family encouraged him. "My father spent more than half of his life working as a labourer. He worked very hard to send me to school and college. We struggled to make ends meet. When I joined police, I knew I could change the situation for others and myself," he added.

He joined the force in 2009 as a constable and was first posted at Vijay Ghat in CP reserve. He was then transferred to Shahbad Dairy police station and later received a promotion.

Meanwhile, head constable Virender Singh rejoiced as his son Vikash Yadav (27) passed the exam and secured the 555th rank. Singh said this was his son's sixth attempt. Yadav, who is posted as a tehsildar in Baghpat, is an engineer from IIT, who started preparing for UPSC in 2016. "I was working when I found out about the result... I started crying and called my parents," he said.

Ganguly to be tourism brand ambassador

Agartala: Former Indian cricket team captain Sourav Ganguly has accepted proposal to be the brand ambassador of Tripura Tourism, said CM Manik Saha after having a telephonic conversation with the former cricketer. "It's a matter of great pride... I am confident that Shri Ganguly Ji's participation will definitely give an impetus to the state's tourism sector," Saha tweeted. Tourism Minister Sushanta Chowdhury also met Ganguly at his residence in Kolkata to discuss the issue. **ENS**

FDI inflows fell 16% to \$71 bn in FY23 on monetary tightening

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU

NEW DELHI, MAY 24

FOREIGN DIRECT Investment (FDI) inflows into the country declined by 16 per cent to \$71 billion on a gross basis in the fiscal ended March 2023 impacted by external factors, mainly monetary policy tightening in developed economies. This is the first fall in FDI inflows in the country in a decade.

In the fiscal year 2022 (FY22), FDI inflows in the country stood at \$84.835 billion.

On a net basis, FDI inflows into India fell 27 per cent to \$28.014 billion in FY23 from \$38.59 billion in FY22.

FDI INFLOWS

YEAR	USD Bn
2022-23	70.97
2021-22	84.83
2020-21	81.97
2019-20	74.39
2018-19	62
2017-18	60.97
2016-17	60.22
2015-16	55.56
2014-15	45.15
2013-14	36

Source : Govt data/RBI

“The fall in FDI inflows is more likely due to global push factors (tighter developed mar-

ket (DM) monetary policy), while domestic pull factors (supply chain relocation) have yet to materially lift FDI,” Nomura said in a note on Wednesday.

The fall in inflows in the previous fiscal appears to have been led by the services sector, with IT-related FDI (the largest component) likely slowing due to lower start-up sector inflows. During the year, inflows in auto sector, construction and broader services also went down, while trading, pharma, energy and chemicals sectors rose. Nomura said FY24 will also be a challenging year because of global uncertainty and expects a turnaround in FDI inflows more likely from FY25.

Uber steps up EV push in India



STEPPING UP ITS India plans, Uber will launch Uber Green in June to add 25,000 electric cars on its platform in partnership with fleet providers like Lithium, Everest and Moove. It will also roll out 10,000 electric two-wheelers in Delhi by 2024 along with Zypp Electric. ■ **PAGE 7**

● ADDS 25,000 CARS TO FLEET IN INDIA

Going green: Uber steps up EV push

REUTERS

New Delhi/ Bengaluru,
May 24

RIDE-HAILING PLATFORM

Uber Technologies is stepping up its efforts to go green in India by introducing more electric vehicles, partnering with fleet operators, boosting financing options and giving its users the option to hire electric vehicles while booking their ride. As part of the launch of Uber Green in June, it will add 25,000 electric cars on its platform in partnership with fleet providers like Lithium, Everest and Moove, the company said on Wednesday.

Besides, it will roll out 10,000 electric two-wheelers in Delhi by 2024 along with Zyp Electric, another EV start-up. It has also joined hands with micro-lender SIDBI to provide \$122.3 million in financing to buy clean cars and build charging stations with partners.

The move comes as a new



Uber is bringing its global mobility agreement with BP Pulse to India, in partnership with Jio-bp

entrant BluSmart, an electric mobility start-up backed by BP's venture fund, is chipping away at the dominance of Uber and SoftBank-backed Ola with bets on an all-electric taxi fleet and an aggressive bid to lure disgruntled passengers and drivers from the incumbents. "India's huge scale and electrification momentum makes the country

a priority for Uber as we seek to meet our commitment to electrify every ride on our platform by 2040," said Andrew Macdonald, the senior vice president for mobility and business operations at Uber.

In partnership with Jio-bp, Uber is bringing its global mobility agreement with BP Pulse to India. The partnership, while enabling Uber drivers to access their charging networks, will also help develop new charging infrastructure. The plans for a green fleet underscore Uber's goal to be carbon neutral by 2040. Uber is targeting more than 1 million EVs in India and South Asia, considering it "a key piece" in its regional growth strategy, a company job ad on LinkedIn said. It also unveiled plans to introduce EVs in India for ride-sharing, its first move to adopt clean cars amid an Indian government push for greater electrification of public transport and shared mobility.



Rambagh Palace of Jaipur named world's No. 1 hotel

INDIAN HOTELS COMPANY'S Rambagh Palace, Jaipur, has ranked as the world's number one hotel in the annual 2023 Travellers' Choice Awards by travel site TripAdvisor. Ozen Reserve Bolifushi, Bolifushi Island, Maldives ranked second, followed by Hotel Colline de France, Gramado, Brazil, in third place. PTI

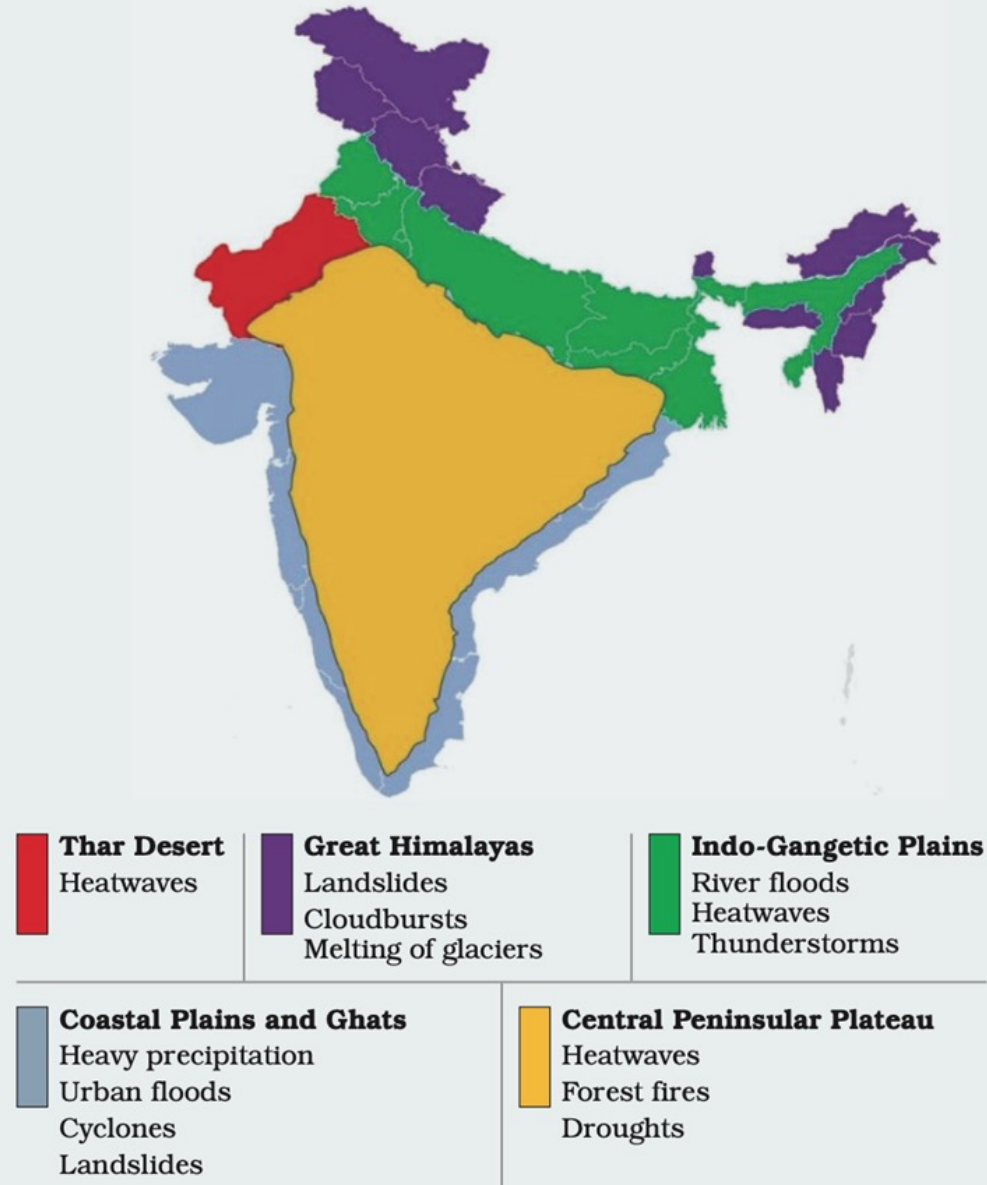
A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, round, woven basket. The basket is covered in a dense, colorful geometric pattern made of small beads or seeds. The pattern consists of interlocking triangles and squares in shades of yellow, orange, red, and blue. The person's hands are visible at the bottom, holding the basket. The background is blurred, showing green foliage.

Economics of Climate Change in India

Over the past months there have been **several stories about how [extreme weather events](#) have disrupted normal life in India.** The [Global Climate Risk Index 2021](#) had ranked India **7th in the list of most affected countries** in terms of exposure and **vulnerability to [climate risk events](#).**

Climate change being one of the most **pressing challenges of the 21st century** poses significant risks not only to the **environment, human health and [food security](#), but also economic development.**

Chart II.1: Risks Emanating from Climate Change across Geographical Regions in India



Note: Map not to scale.

- 
- The background is a dark, textured surface with a faint grid pattern. Overlaid on this are several thick, wavy lines in various colors including green, yellow, orange, red, and blue. There are also some blurred, colorful shapes that look like bokeh or out-of-focus lights in the background.
- Climate change can **adversely affect both the supply side (the productive potential) and the demand side (the consumption and investment) of the economy.**
 - It can also have spillover effects across regions and sectors, as well as **cross-border impacts and contagion risks.**

- 
- **Impacts:**
 - **Reduced Agricultural Output:**
 - **Disruption of the Fisheries Sector**
 - **Increased Health Costs**
 - According to the [WHO](#), between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 2,50,000 additional deaths per year, from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and [heat stress](#).

- **Damaged Infrastructure**
- **Reduced Industrial Output**
- **Energy Crisis**



What are India's Initiatives to Tackle Climate Change?

Panchamrit: India has presented the following five nectar elements (Panchamrit) of India's climate action:

-
- **National Action Plan on Climate Change:**
 - It aims at creating awareness among the representatives of the public, different agencies of the **government, scientists, industry and the communities** on the threat posed by climate change and the steps to counter it.

The 'Climate-Smart Village' approach in India is a part of a project led by the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), an international research programme.



-
- What More can India do to Combat the Impacts of Climate Change?
 - **Enhancing Carbon Sequestration:**
 - **Building Climate Resilience**
 - **Driving India's Green Transportation Revolution**
 - **Climate Smart Agriculture:**



-
- **In the context of India's preparation for Climate-Smart Agriculture, consider the following statements: (2021)**

1. The 'Climate-Smart Village' approach in India is a part of a project led by the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), an international research programme.
2. The project of CCAFS is carried out under Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) headquartered in France.
3. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) in India is one of the CGIAR's research centres.

- **Which of the statements given above are correct?**
- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

- **Which of the following best describes/describe the aim of 'Green India Mission' of the Government of India? (2016)**

1. Incorporating environmental benefits and costs into the Union and State Budgets thereby implementing the 'green accounting'.
2. Launching the second green revolution to enhance agricultural output so as to ensure food security to one and all in the future.
3. Restoring and enhancing forest cover and responding to climate change by a combination of adaptation and mitigation measures.

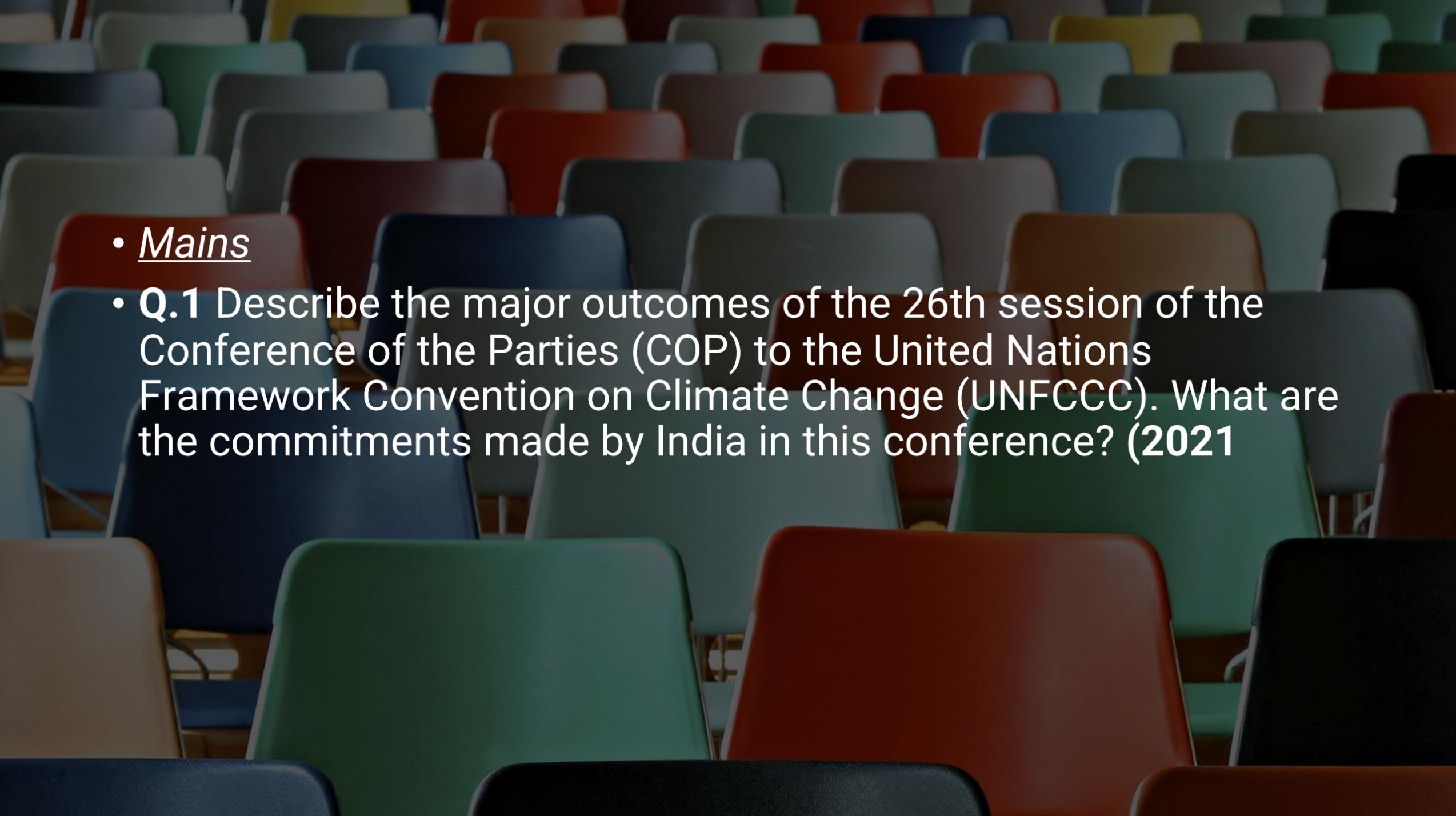
- **Select the correct answer using the code given below.**

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

-
- **With reference to 'Global Climate Change Alliance', which of the following statements is/are correct? (2017)**

1. It is an initiative of the European Union.
2. It provides technical and financial support to targeted developing countries to integrate climate change into their development policies and budgets.
3. It is coordinated by World Resources Institute (WRI) and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

- **Select the correct answer using the code given below:**
- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3



- Mains

- **Q.1** Describe the major outcomes of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). What are the commitments made by India in this conference? (2021


Forum Shopping

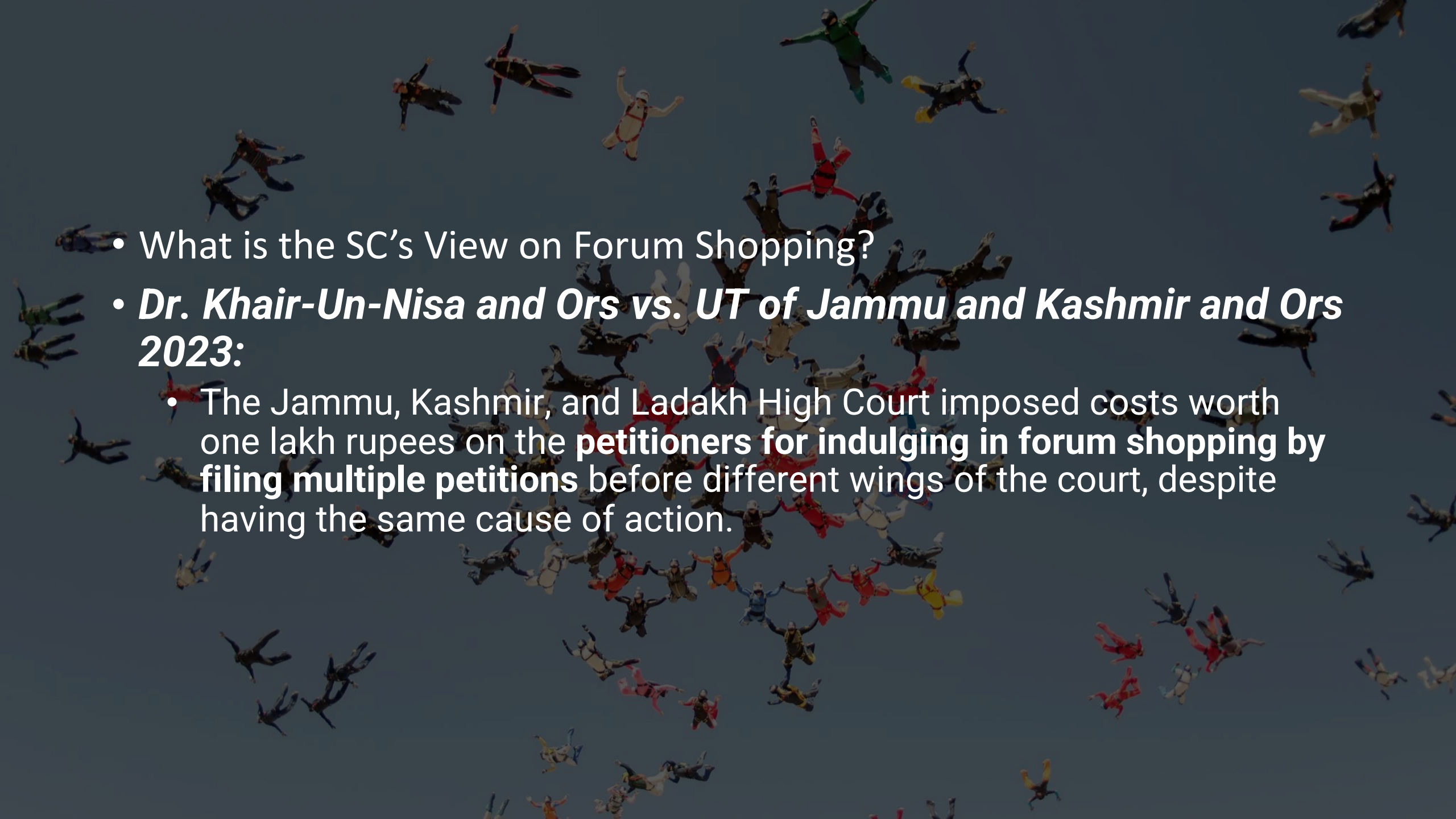


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- Recently, the [Chief Justice of India \(CJI\)](#) has condemned the practice of **Forum Shopping** after a [litigant](#) mentioned the hearing before CJI although he had mentioned the same case a day before another Judge.



- Forum shopping refers to the practice of **deliberately choosing a specific court for a legal case** in the hope of getting a favorable outcome.
- Litigants and lawyers often consider this strategy as part of their litigation plan.
 - For example, they might opt for a higher court like the [Supreme Court \(SC\)](#) to gain more attention for their case. However, if someone is clearly trying to manipulate the system or avoid a particular judge, **it is seen as unfair.**

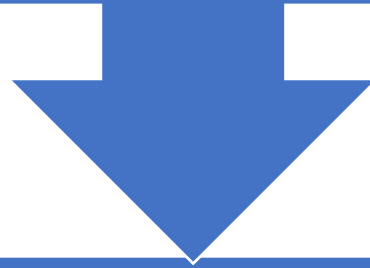
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- A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the middle ground, surrounded by lush green trees and hills. In the foreground, a wooden picnic table sits on a grassy bank. A large, leafy tree with reddish-brown flowers frames the right side of the image. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.
- Similarly, **“Bench Hunting”** refers to **petitioners managing to get their cases heard by a particular judge or bench** to ensure a favourable order.

- 
- What is the SC's View on Forum Shopping?
 - ***Dr. Khair-Un-Nisa and Ors vs. UT of Jammu and Kashmir and Ors 2023:***
 - The Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh High Court imposed costs worth one lakh rupees on the **petitioners for indulging in forum shopping by filing multiple petitions** before different wings of the court, despite having the same cause of action.



Edible Oil Prices and Significance for India

Edible oils have experienced significant **Price volatility** over the past 2-3 years.



The global vegetable oils price index of the [UN Food and Agriculture Organization](#) experienced a significant drop to **77.8 points** (2014-16 base period value = 100) in **May 2020 during the peak of global Covid lockdowns**. However, it reached an all-time high of **251.8 points in March 2022 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine**.

What are the Factors for
Volatility in Edible Oil Price?

The war between Ukraine
and Russia disrupted the
world's supply of this
oilseed, as the Black
Sea ports were shut off.

Ukraine and Russia
accounted for nearly **58%**
of global production in
2021-22, causing prices to
skyrocket.

The situation changed with the [Black Sea Grain Initiative](#) agreement between Russia and Ukraine, brokered by the UN and Turkey. The agreement facilitated the safe navigation of vessels carrying grain and foodstuffs from designated Ukrainian ports.

This led to the shipping out of accumulated sunflower oil, meal, and seed from Ukraine, resulting in **international vegetable oil prices falling below pre-war levels.**

What does this Translate into for India?

Reduction in Cost

Impact on Consumers

What is the Scenario of Consumption of Cooking Oil in India?

India consumes **23.5-24 million tonnes (mt) of cooking oil annually**, out of which 13.5-14 mt is imported and the balance 9.5-10 mt produced from domestically cultivated seed.

Sunflower is the **fourth largest consumed oil (2-2.5 mt)**, behind mustard (3-3.5 mt), soyabean (4.5-5 mt) and palm (8-8.5 mt).

IMPORT OF EDIBLE OILS (lakh tonnes)

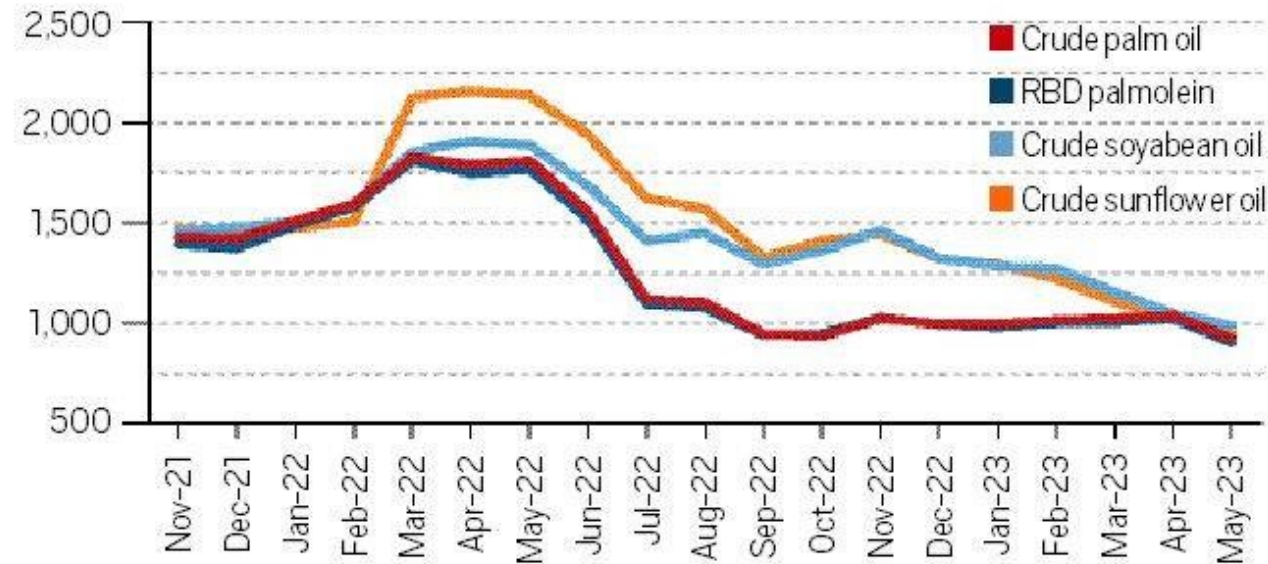
	Palm Oil	Soyabean	Sunflower	TOTAL
2017-18	87.01	30.47	25.25	145.17
2018-19	94.09	30.94	23.51	149.13
2019-20	72.17	33.84	25.19	131.75
2020-21	83.21	28.66	18.94	131.32
2021-22	79.15	41.72	19.44	140.30
2021-22*	32.26	22.07	11.10	65.43
2022-23*	49.09	17.26	13.67	80.02



Note: Figures are for Oil Year (Nov-Oct); *Nov-Apr.

Source: The Solvent Extractors' Association of India.

AVERAGE GLOBAL VEGETABLE OIL PRICES (\$/tonne, CIF India)



- **Consider the following statements: (2018)**

1. The quantity of imported edible oils is more than the domestic production of edible oils in the last five years.
2. The Government does not impose any customs duty on all the imported edible oils as a special case.

- **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

An aerial photograph showing a dark, winding river or stream that meanders through a vast, dense forest. The forest is composed of numerous green trees, with some lighter-colored, bare branches visible in certain areas. The river's path is irregular, with several loops and bends, creating a complex pattern against the green landscape. The text "Son River" is overlaid in the center of the image, underlined.

Son River

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has issued a directive to halt all mining activities in **Son riverbed** in Sonbhadra district, Uttar Pradesh.

The directive addresses **illegal mining, imposing environmental compensation on mining companies.**

The Son River, also known as the **Sone River**, is a **perennial river** that flows through central India.

The Son River is the **2nd-largest southern (right bank) tributary** of the [Ganges](#) after the [Yamuna River](#).

It originates near **Amarkantak Hill** in the **Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi** district of Chhattisgarh and finally merges with the **Ganges River** near **Patna** in **Bihar**.

- **Son forms a series of waterfalls** at the edge of Amarkantak plateau.

It flows through four states: **Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar**.



Tributaries:

- Ghaghar, Johilla, Chhoti Mahanadi, Banas, Gopad, Rihand, Kanhar and North Koel River.



Funding the Future: WHO's Financial Budget

- The WHO recently agreed upon a budget of **USD 6.83 billion for the next two years at the 76th [World Health Assembly \(WHA\)](#)**, representing a historic **20% increase in assessed contributions**.



Assessed contributions, which are membership fees paid by countries based on their wealth and population, **have seen a decline in their share of financing the WHO over the years.**



This decline has been **compensated by voluntary contributions**, which now account for more than **three-quarters of the organisation's funding.**



The reliance on voluntary contributions raises **questions about the governance and sustainability of the organisation.**

- 
- A row of stylized human figures, rendered in a dark blue-grey color, standing in a line across the middle of the slide. They are slightly out of focus, serving as a background element for the text.
- The top contributors to the WHO in 2020-2021 were Germany, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the US, the UK, and the European Commission.
 - However, there have been concerns about the influence of earmarked contributions and their potential impact on the WHO's flexibility.

Tributaries:

- Ghaghar, Johilla, Chhoti Mahanadi, Banas, Gopad, Rihand, Kanhar and North Koel River.

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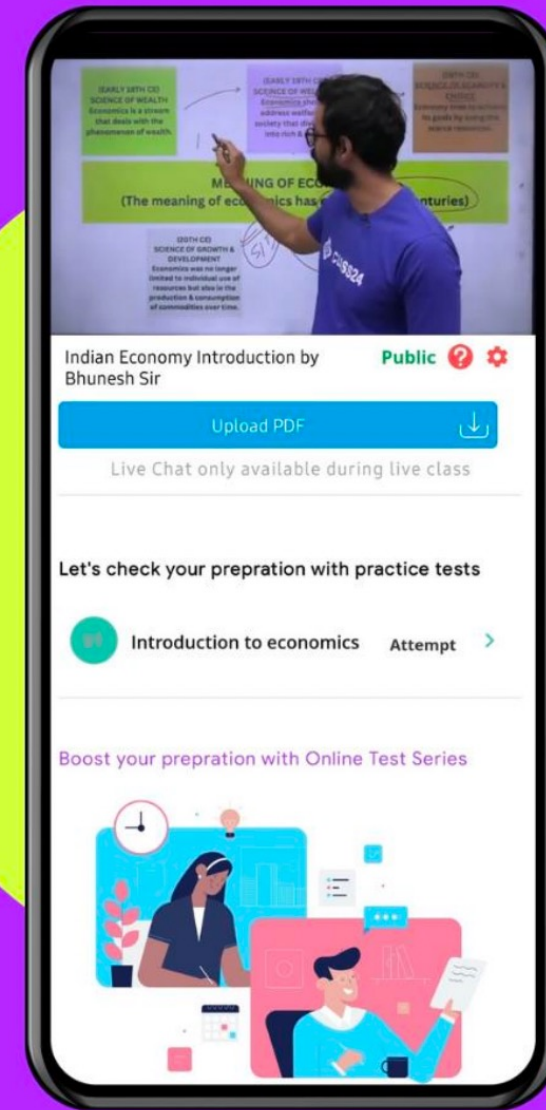
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tomorrow
