

# Daily Current Affairs



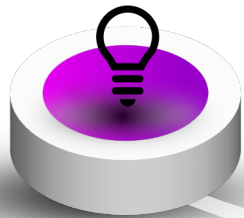


**4**  
**The Hindu**

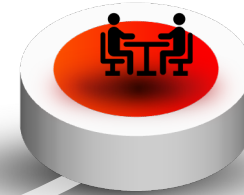


**6**  
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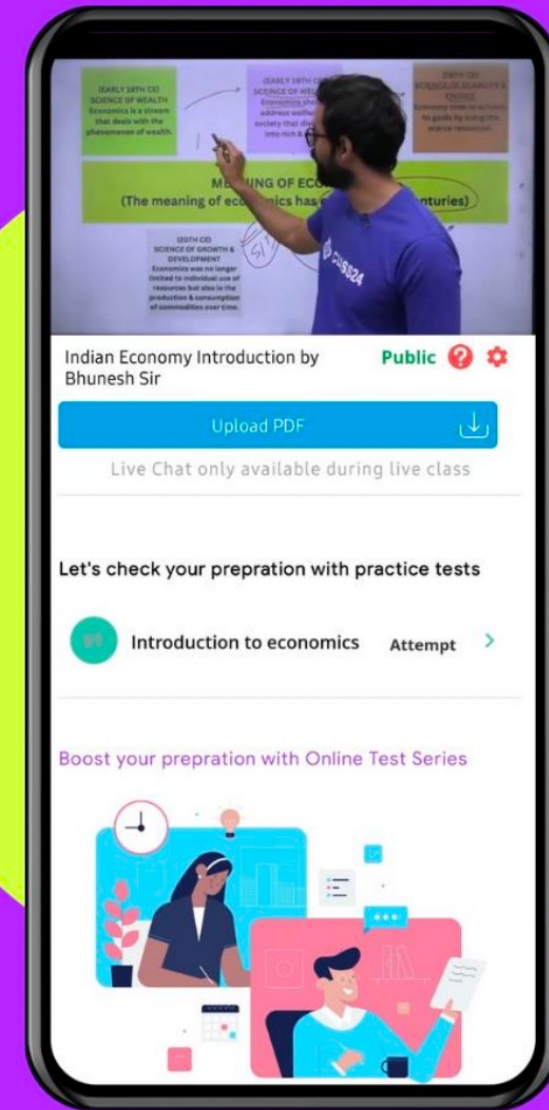
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EFFORT





# All-in-one policy plan to spread insurance in India

IRDA is devising an affordable product covering health, life, property, accident risks to give citizens protection, expedite claim settlements by linking death registries onto one industry platform

**Vikas Dhoot**  
NEW DELHI

If India's insurance regulator's plans fructify, households across the country could soon be able to get an affordable single policy that covers health, life, property and accident, get their claims settled within hours, and even secure value-added services at the time of buying a policy.

In an ambitious bid to expand the poor insurance penetration in the country, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) is devising a new affordable bundled product to give citizens protection against multiple risks, and seeking to expedite claim settlements by linking death registries onto a common industry platform.

These initiatives are part of a broader overhaul – in-

## Cover drive for the uninsured

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority is driving multi-pronged changes to expand citizens' safety nets



■ A new bundled insurance product Bima Vistar to provide life, health, accident and property cover through a single, simple policy



■ A Bima Sugam platform as a one-stop shop for customers, integrating insurers and distributors



■ Linking digital death registries to platform so claims can be settled within hours or a day



■ Permitting insurers to sell value-added services with policies; for example, a yoga class bundled with a health scheme



■ Women to lead campaign to spur insurance penetration in each Gram Sabha



■ Roping in States to form insurance committees and expand coverage across districts

■ Move will also allow smaller, micro and regional insurers to reach different strata of society

cluding legislative amendments to attract more investments through differentiated licences for niche players similar to the banking sector – with an eye on making insurance “available, affordable and accessible” to all citizens with a “gram panchayat-to-

district- to State-level’ approach.

### ‘UPI-like moment’

The regulator believes these changes could double the number of jobs in the sector to 1.2 crore.

IRDA chief Debasish Panda said on Thursday

that they are striving to create an “UPI-like moment” in insurance through a plan worked out with general and life insurance firms that he termed “Bima Trinity”.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 12

# Cover drive for the uninsured

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■ Move will also allow smaller, micro and regional insurers to reach different strata of society

- Insurance penetration in India has risen steadily from 2.7% in 2000 to 4.2% in 2020 and was 3.2% in 2021, as per the Economic Survey 2022-23 released on January 31, 2023.

Tribal communities in India constitute a significant portion of the country's population, accounting for **approximately 8.9%**.

Out of the total Schedule Tribe population, approximately 2.6 million (2.5%) belong to **“Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups” (PVTGs)** known as the **“Primitive Tribes”** - the most disadvantaged of all the Schedule Tribe communities.



They are spread across various states, with higher concentrations in states like **Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan**, the NER states and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands

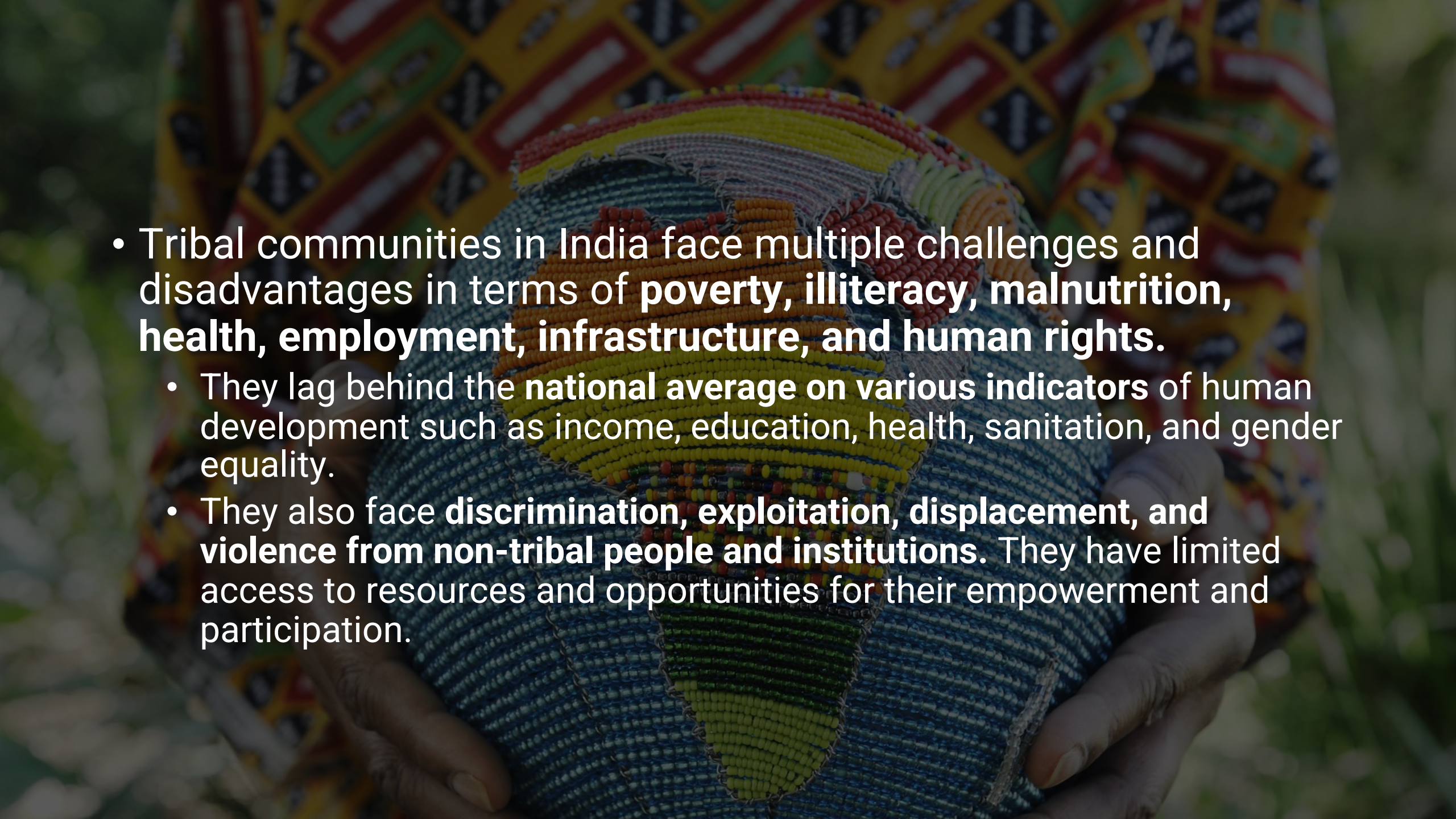
Certain tribal communities in India are recognized as Scheduled Tribes (STs) under **Article 342 of the Constitution of India**.

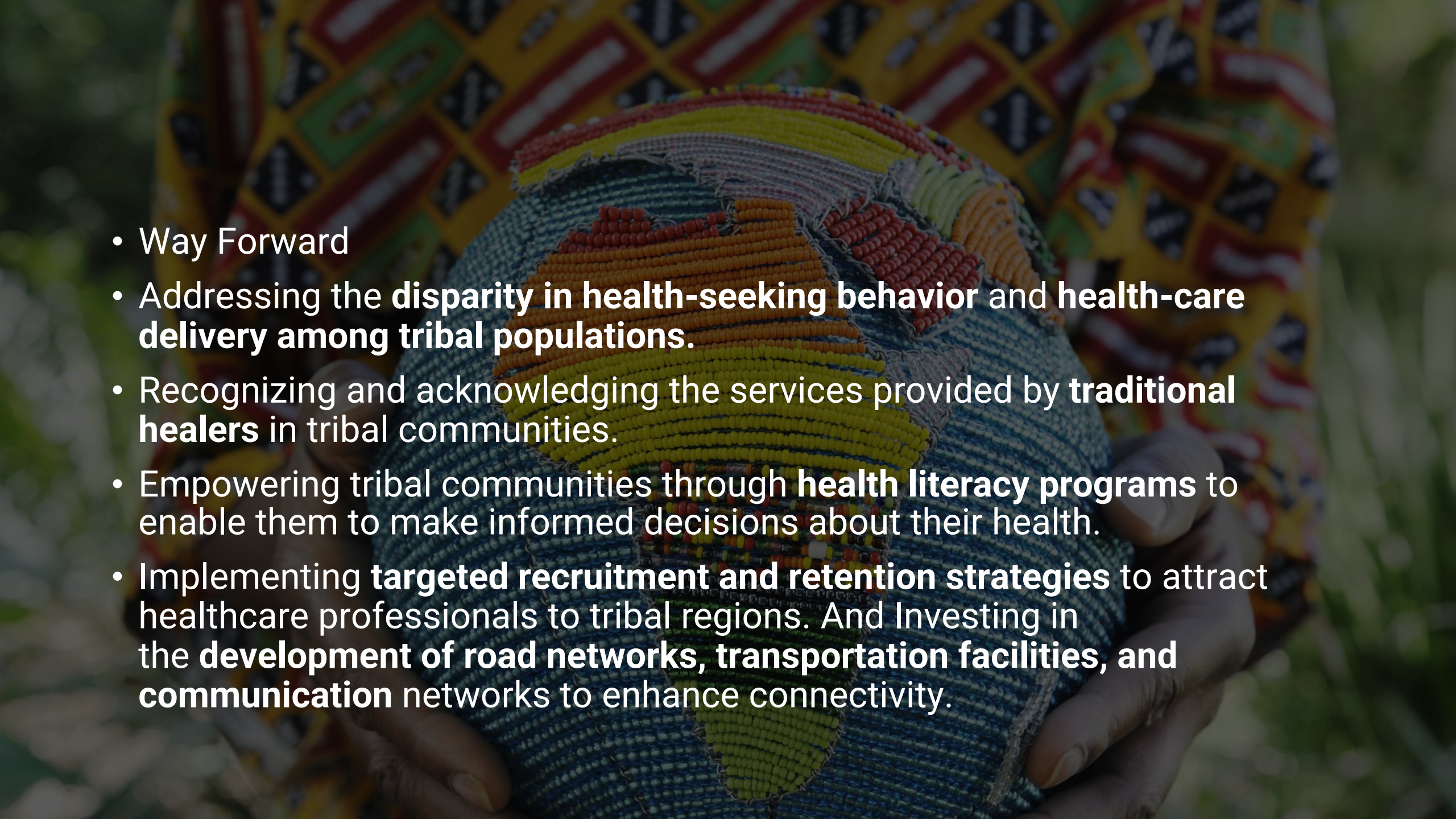
- They are entitled to special provisions and safeguards for their social, economic, educational, and political development.

Their interests are safeguarded by various laws and policies such as the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Scheduled areas, Forest Rights Act 2006, and the PESA Act 1996.

They also have representation in the Parliament and **State Legislatures** through reserved seats.

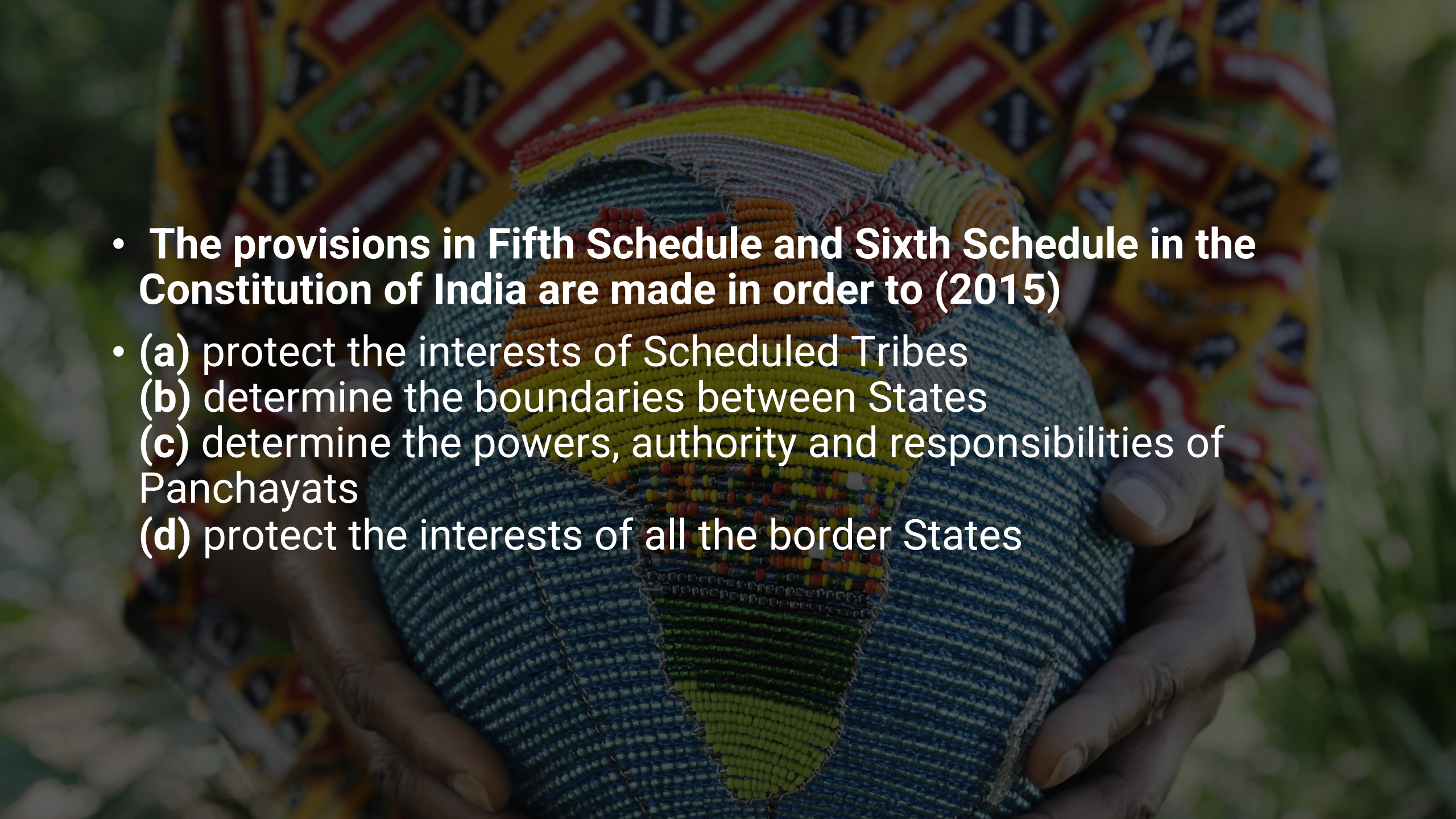
- Draupadi Murmu is India's first tribal President.

- 
- A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large, colorful, beaded basket. The basket is made of woven fabric and is covered in intricate patterns of small, multi-colored beads in shades of red, yellow, green, and blue. The background is a blurred, patterned fabric, possibly a traditional Indian textile. The overall scene is brightly lit, highlighting the vibrant colors of the beads and the texture of the fabric.
- Tribal communities in India face multiple challenges and disadvantages in terms of **poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, health, employment, infrastructure, and human rights.**
    - They lag behind the **national average on various indicators** of human development such as income, education, health, sanitation, and gender equality.
    - They also face **discrimination, exploitation, displacement, and violence from non-tribal people and institutions.** They have limited access to resources and opportunities for their empowerment and participation.

- 
- A person's hands are shown holding a large, colorful, beaded object, possibly a traditional artifact or a piece of art. The object is made of many small, colorful beads (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) arranged in a pattern that resembles a map or a traditional design. The background is a patterned fabric with a geometric design in red, yellow, and black. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the text overlaid on the left side.
- Way Forward
  - Addressing the **disparity in health-seeking behavior and health-care delivery among tribal populations.**
  - Recognizing and acknowledging the services provided by **traditional healers** in tribal communities.
  - Empowering tribal communities through **health literacy programs** to enable them to make informed decisions about their health.
  - Implementing **targeted recruitment and retention strategies** to attract healthcare professionals to tribal regions. And Investing in the **development of road networks, transportation facilities, and communication networks** to enhance connectivity.



- 
- A person is holding a large, round, woven basket. The basket is decorated with intricate patterns of colorful beads in shades of yellow, red, blue, and green. The person's hands are visible at the bottom of the basket. The background is a blurred pattern of similar colors, suggesting a traditional setting.
- Every year, a month long ecologically important campaign/festival is held during which certain communities/tribes plant saplings of fruit-bearing trees. Which of the following are such communities/ tribes? (2014)
  - (a) Bhutia and Lepcha
  - (b) Gond and Korku
  - (c) Irula and Toda
  - (d) Sahariya and Agariya

- 
- A person is holding a large, round, colorful basket made of woven fabric and beads. The basket features various colors including blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. The person's hands are visible at the bottom of the basket. The background is a patterned fabric with a geometric design in yellow, red, and black.
- **The provisions in Fifth Schedule and Sixth Schedule in the Constitution of India are made in order to (2015)**
  - (a) protect the interests of Scheduled Tribes
  - (b) determine the boundaries between States
  - (c) determine the powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats
  - (d) protect the interests of all the border States

**Under which Schedule of the Constitution of India can the transfer of tribal land to private parties for mining be declared null and void? (2019)**

- (a) Third Schedule**
- (b) Fifth Schedule**
- (c) Ninth Schedule**
- (d) Twelfth Schedule**



If a particular area is brought under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India, which one of the following statements best reflects the consequence of it? (2022)



- (a) This would prevent the transfer of land of tribal people to non-tribal people.
- (b) This would create a local self-governing body in that area.
- (c) This would convert that area into a Union Territory.
- (d) The State having such areas would be declared a Special Category State.

# Text & Comment

THE HINDU

**NEWS IN NUMBERS**

**The estimated wheat production of India in the 2022-23 crop year**

**112.74** million tonnes. The overall foodgrain production is likely to be a record 330.53 million tonnes in the July-June period of 2022-23, as per the Agriculture Ministry.

**The highest-ever turnover of the ITDC in 2022-23**

**458.08** crore. ITDC's profit before tax for the financial year of 2023 jumped 98.3% year-on-year to 86.12 crore.

**The land Himachal aims to bring under natural farming**

**30,000** acres. Right now, 1.59 lakh farmers are practising natural farming on 50,000 acres of land, the agriculture department informed.

**UN observes the diamond jubilee of UN peacekeeping**

**75** years. The UN has sent more than two million peacekeepers to help countries move away from conflict, with successes in Liberia and Cambodia. A ceremony will honour 4,200 peacekeepers who died since 1948.

**The number of people living in 'modern slavery', says report**

**50** million. The 20 richest countries are fuelling forced labour and account for over half the people living in 'modern slavery', as per the Walk Free Foundation.

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## do judges recuse themselves?

What is meant by a recusal? Do mass recusals call into question judicial transparency? What rules has the Supreme Court formulated in the past on recusals? How do other countries deal with recusals and judicial bias?

**EXPLAINER**

Aaratrika Bhaumik

**The story so far:** Last week former Supreme Court judge Justice M.R. Shah refused to recuse himself from hearing a plea by former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Saranjeet Bhatt to submit additional evidence to back his Gujarat High Court appeal against his conviction in a 1990 curial death case. Mr. Bhatt contended that there was a reasonable apprehension of bias as Justice Shah, as a High Court judge, passed strictures against him while hearing his plea linked to the same FIR. However, Justice Shah dismissed the plea as an attempt to indulge in 'bench hunting'. Similarly, a few weeks ago, the Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud rejected an application seeking his recusal from hearing petitions seeking legal recognition of same-sex marriages.

**Why do judges recuse?**

Whenever there is a potential conflict of interest, a judge can withdraw from a case to prevent the perception that the judge was biased while deciding a case. This conflict of interest can arise in many ways — from holding shares in a litigant company to having a prior or personal association with a party. Another common reason is when an appeal is filed in the Supreme Court against a High Court judgment delivered by the concerned judge before his elevation. The practice stems from the cardinal principle of due process of law — *nemo iudex in causa sua*, that is, no person shall be a judge in his own case. Another principle guiding judicial recusals is 'justice must not only be done but must also be seen to be done' propounded in 1924 in *River v. Swanex* Justice by the then Lord Chief Justice of England.

By taking the oath of office, judges promise to perform their duties, "without fear or favour, or partiality or ill-will", in accordance with the Third Schedule of the Constitution. Furthermore, the Restatement of the Values of Judicial Life adopted by the Supreme Court forbids a judge from deciding a case involving any entity where he holds pecuniary interest unless the concerned parties clarify that they have no objections.

**What is the procedure for recusal?** There are two kinds of recusals — an automatic recusal where a judge himself withdraws from the case, or when a party raises a plea for recusal highlighting the possibility of bias or personal interest of the judge in the case.

The decision to recuse rests solely on the conscience and discretion of the judge and no party can compel a judge to withdraw from a case. While judges have recused themselves even if they do not see a conflict but only because such apprehension was cast, there are also several instances where judges have refused to withdraw from a case. In 2019, while hearing a plea on the plight of inmates in Assam's detention centres, the then CJ Bhanu Prasad was asked to recuse himself for some adverse oral remarks. Mr. Gogoi refused, saying that the plea had "enormous potential to damage the institution". If a judge recuses himself, the case is listed before the Chief Justice for allotment to an alternate Bench. India has no codified rules governing recusals, although several Supreme Court judgments have dealt with the issue.

**Do judges have to record a reason for recusal?** Since there are no statutory rules governing the process, it is often left to



ISTOCKPHOTO

the judges themselves to record reasons for recusals. Some judges specify oral reasons in open court while others issue a written order recording the reasons. In other cases, the reasons are speculative.

More often than not, the reasons behind a recusal are not disclosed leading to a diatribe against judicial transparency especially when mass recusals occur in sensitive cases. For instance, last year, five judges of the Bombay High Court recused themselves from the Bhima Koregaon case. Similarly, the recusal of Supreme Court judge Justice Bela M. Trivedi earlier this year from hearing Bilkis Bano's plea led to widespread speculation since no reasons were specified. The recusal was largely attributed to Justice Trivedi's deputation as Law Secretary to the Gujarat government from 2004 to 2006.

In the 2015 Supreme Court judgment striking down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC), a claim for Justice J.S. Khosla's recusal was made on the ground that he was a member of the Collegium. In his concurring opinion, Justice Kurian Joseph wrote that it was the judge's "constitutional duty" to be "transparent and accountable" and therefore, reasons must be indicated for recusal. This will negate any reason for attributing any motive for the recusal, he said. On the contrary, Justice Madan Lokur was of the opinion that citing reasons for recusal is unwarranted, expressing apprehension about a scenario where a party may challenge the reasoning before a court and it would set aside the recusal, ruling that the reason was frivolous. He, however, highlighted the need for 'procedural and substantive rules' to deal with the growing frequency of recusal pleas.

The Delhi High Court recently ruled that no litigant or third party has any right to intervene, comment or enquire regarding a judge's recusal from a case.

**What rules has Supreme Court formulated in the past?** The Supreme Court has over time outlined various factors to be taken into consideration for deciding the impartiality of a judge. In *Korla Thevar versus Union of India* (1987), the SC held that to determine if a judge should recuse, what is relevant is the reasonableness of the apprehension of bias in the mind of the concerned party. "The proper approach for the judge is not to look at his

own mind and ask himself, however honestly, 'Am I biased?' but to look at the mind of the party before him," the Court ruled.

The SC in *State of West Bengal versus Shivananda Pathak* (1998), defined judicial bias as a "preconceived opinion or a predisposition or predetermination to decide a case or an issue in a particular manner, so much so that such predisposition does not leave the mind open to conviction". Thus, it is a condition of mind which renders the judge incapable of impartiality in a particular case, the Court explained. Formulating a more definite rule in the *Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association versus the Union of India* (2018), the Court observed that where a judge has a pecuniary interest, no further inquiry is needed as to whether there was a "real danger" or "reasonable suspicion of bias. However, other cases require such an inquiry, with the relevant test being the 'real danger' test — whether there is a 'real danger' of bias, to ensure that the court is thinking in terms of possibility rather than the probability of bias.

In a controversial recusal ruling, Justice Arun Mishra in the *Andhra Development Authority versus Manohar Lal Ors* (2019), held that a judge who had rendered any decision in a smaller combination is not disqualified from being part of a larger Bench to which a reference is made. Noting that merely having a legal opinion does not disentitle one from being impartial, Justice Mishra said, "We have to deal with the cases every day in which similar or somewhat different questions are involved concerning the same provision. For having taken a view once, if recusal is to be made, it would be very difficult to get a judge to hear and decide a question of law..."

**What do some of the recent recusal orders say?** In February, Additional Sessions Judge Arul Varma recused himself citing "personal reasons" less than a week after discharging Jawaharlal Nehru University student Sharjeel Imam and 10 others in the 2019 Jammu Mills violence case. The judge called the student activists arraigned in the case "scapegoats" and added that the police had "trampled the rights of the accused". On March 26, the Delhi High Court set aside Varma's order.

Delhi High Court judge Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani in March recused himself from hearing accused Anif Iqbal Tariq's plea against the 'leak' of his alleged confession statement by the Delhi Police to the media in a 2020 Northeast Delhi riots "larger conspiracy" probe. He observed that "no act on the part of a court must in any manner have a deleterious impact on the credibility of the justice system".

During an earlier hearing, Justice Bhambhani indicated he may have to recuse himself after News Broadcasters & Digital Association (NBDA) moved an intervention application saying he had a "past association" with them. He remarked during proceedings that a judge's "comfort level" is also a consideration when it comes to recusals, adding, "I never got into a matter where I myself am not comfortable with my independence".

**What about foreign jurisdictions?** Contrasted with India, the U.S. has a well-defined law on recusals — Title 28 of the U.S. Code details the grounds for 'disqualification of justices, judge, or magistrate judge'. Such rules are also codified in the American Bar Association's Model Code of Judicial Conduct. This specifies three grounds for recusal — financial or corporate interest, a case in which the judge was a material witness or a lawyer, and a relationship to a party.

The U.S. law on judicial recusals evolved through judicial pronouncements. In the landmark case of *R versus Gough*, the 'real danger' test was adopted as the applicable standard based on which recusal orders need to be passed. The test entailed disqualification solely on substantive and tangible evidence which convincingly highlights the presence of judicial bias and prejudice. However, the 'real danger' test was subjected to substantial criticism especially since the European Convention of Human Rights requires only the 'appearance of bias' to ensure that an impartial tribunal is present on any litigant to prove actual bias. Accordingly, a new test was formulated in *Lewis v. Northern Spirit Ltd* where the standard laid down was to look at the likelihood of bias from the perspective of a fair-minded and reasonable observer.

**THE GIST**

Whenever there is a potential conflict of interest, a judge can withdraw from a case to prevent the perception that the judge was biased while deciding a case. There are two kinds of recusals — an automatic recusal where a judge himself withdraws from the case, or when a party raises a plea for recusal highlighting the possibility of bias or personal interest of the judge in the case.

The decision to recuse rests solely on the conscience and discretion of the judge and no party can compel a judge to withdraw from a case. Since there are no statutory rules governing the process, it is often left to the judges themselves to record reasons for recusals.

The Delhi High Court recently ruled that no litigant or third party has any right to intervene, comment or enquire regarding a judge's recusal from a case.

# UN observes the diamond jubilee of UN peacekeeping

**75** years. The UN has sent more than two million peacekeepers to help countries move away from conflict, with successes in Liberia and Cambodia. A ceremony will honour 4,200 peacekeepers who died since 1948. AP

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# UN PEACEKEEPING — WE ARE A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP



## PEACEKEEPING IS SUPPORTED BY

**193** member states



### WHO CONTRIBUTE

PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT & FUNDS



\*BUDGET **7.23** BILLION

LESS THAN **0.5%** OF WORLD MILITARY EXPENDITURES



**116,919**  
TOTAL FIELD PERSONNEL

**117** COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTING TROOPS, POLICE & MILITARY PERSONNEL

## WORKING WITH OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

**AU**  
African Union

**EU**  
European Union

## AND OUR UN PARTNERS INCLUDING

The World Bank

**UNDP**  
United Nations Development Programme

**UN WOMEN**

## PEACEKEEPING INCLUDES



ACROSS

**16** MISSIONS  
ACROSS **4** CONTINENTS

## THE LARGEST MISSION IS IN

**Darfur** IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **AU** African Union  
**26,612** personnel

## PEACEKEEPING HAS A GLOBAL LOGISTICS OPERATION



46

AIRPLANES



12

SHIPS



147

HELICOPTERS



33,437

VEHICLES



22

HOSPITALS



252

MEDICAL CLINICS

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HOST COUNTRIES WE HELP PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

**4 M** TOTAL AREA OF COUNTRIES WE OPERATE IN  
sq km

**154 M** LOCAL POPULATION OF COUNTRIES WE OPERATE IN

[un.org/peacekeeping](http://un.org/peacekeeping)

Data used from 2010–2012  
\*Approved resources for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013

When the [UN Security Council](#) approved the deployment of UN military observers to the **Middle East in 1948**, the **UN Peacekeeping Forces** were established.

UN peacekeeping forces aid nations in negotiating the perilous transition from **war to peace**.

**International Day of UN Peacekeepers** is celebrated on date **29<sup>th</sup> May** every year.

**2022 Theme:** People. Peace. Progress. The Power of Partnerships



- 
- **India and UNPKF:**
  - **India is among the nations that send the most troops to the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces.**
    - **Example: India is the second-highest military and fifth-highest police contributing country to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).**

Over **2,60,000** Indians have served in **49 U.N. Peacekeeping missions** since **1948**.

In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an **all-women contingent** to a UN Peacekeeping mission.

In the last six decades, **179 Indian soldiers** have died in [UN Peacekeeping operations](#).

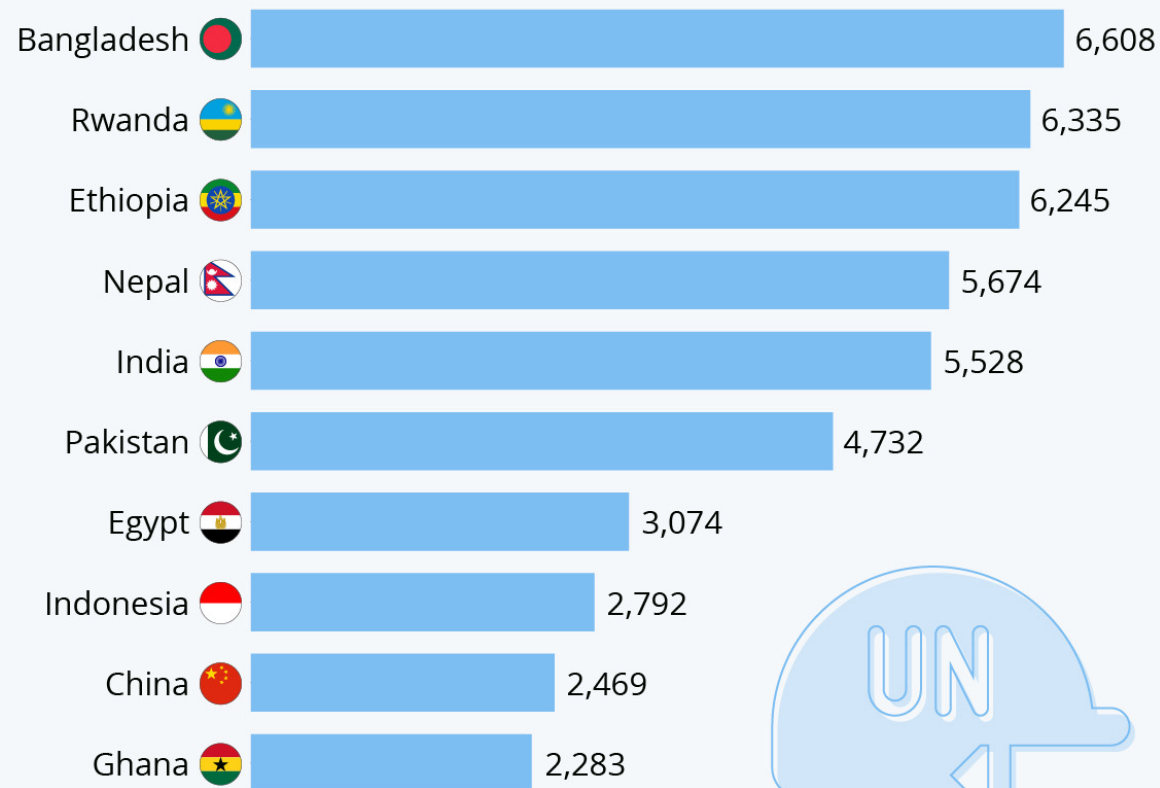
Among ["blue helmets"](#) it has the greatest death toll of any nation.

- **Blue Helmets** are the **military personnel of the UN** that work alongside the UN Police and civilian colleagues to promote “**stability, security, and peace processes**”.



# The Biggest Contributors To UN Peacekeeping Operations

Main contributors of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping operations as of March 31, 2021\*



\* Uniformed personnel constitute mission experts, police units, staff officers and troops.

Source: United Nations



# INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION IN GLOBAL PEACEKEEPING



More than 2 lakh Indian's have served for 49 out of 71 peacekeeping missions conducted by the United Nations over the past 70 years.

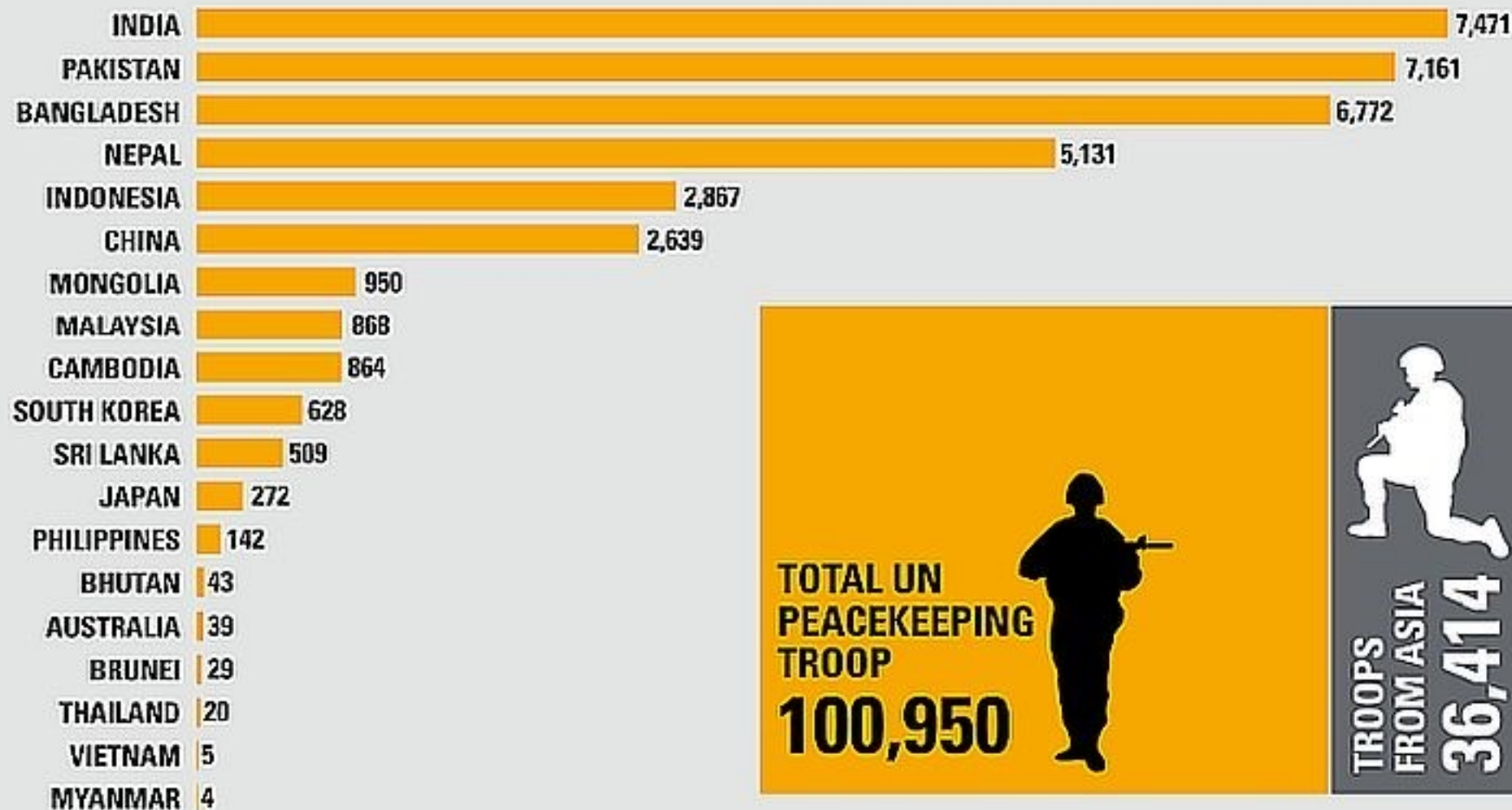
India has contributed more number of peacekeeper than any other country in the world.



India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ethiopia and Rawanda contribute the largest amount of peacekeepers in the world. They provide 35% of the total peacekeepers in the world.

# Which Asian country provides the most troops for the UN peacekeeping mission?

The UN's peacekeeping force is dominated by troops from Asian countries, with India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal currently contributing the largest number of peacekeepers.



Mission	Details
Korea(1950-54)	To facilitate withdrawal of sick and wounded in Korea
Indo-China(1954-70)	India provided an Infantry Battalion and supporting staff for control of Indo-China comprising three states of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Tasks included monitoring, ceasefire and repatriation of prisoners of war, among other
Middle East (1956-67)	United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), where for first time armed troop contingents were deployed. India's contribution was an infantry battalion and other support elements
Cambodia(1992-1993)	Was set up to supervise ceasefire, disarm combatants, repatriate refugees and monitor conduct of free and fair elections
Lebanon(Since 1998)	The current situation in the Mission is tense and volatile due to the crises in Syria. And India has provided One infantry battalion group, along with hospital staff for the mission
Sudan(Since 2005)	The latest political developments in the Mission led to widespread inter-tribe violence and large displacement of locals.. The current situation continues to be highly volatile and sporadic clashes between the tribes are being reported regularly India has contributed two Infantry Battalion groups, and Engineering assistance

IN BRIEF



**Jharkhand could not develop as expected, says Murmu**  
President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday expressed her disappointment over Jharkhand not being developed as expected. She said this in the presence of Chief Minister Hemant Soren, while addressing a women's conference at Chhatis. Ms. Murmu said the State could not develop much despite having Chief Ministers from tribal communities. "Jharkhand Chief Minister is here and I am really disappointed that Jharkhand could not develop as expected. It has been 22 years of formation of Jharkhand and from day one, most of the Chief Ministers of the State have been from tribal communities except one time from another community," she said.

**NIA conducts searches in U.P. in Bhopal terror funding case**

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has conducted searches in Uttar Pradesh in connection with the Bhopal terror funding case involving the pro-Taliban organisation, Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). The agency said the searches were aimed at exposing further links and conspiracies of the 10 persons who have been charged/indicted in the case. Six of them are Bangladeshi nationals and active JMB cadre. "They had entered India illegally without any valid documents, and subsequently, they forged Indian identity documents with the help of their sympathisers in India," it said.

**Amid reports of shortage, FSSAI to hold surveillance on milk and milk products**

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Aimed at curbing adulteration of milk and milk products, in both organised and unorganised sectors in all the districts of the States and Union Territories, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) will conduct nationwide surveillance this year. The announcement on Thursday comes against the backdrop of the country facing an alleged milk shortage with cooperatives reporting only a 1.2% increase in production this year and organised and unorganised sector pointing to registering stagnation. The sector also continues to grapple with the hit it took during COVID-19 and more recently the humpy skin disease (which caused the death of 1.9



In 2022, the FSSAI conducted a milk survey in selected 12 States, Reuters

lakh cattle) and fodder inflation at 30%. Meanwhile, giving details of the proposed surveillance, the FSSAI said that the operations would identify hotspots for adulteration in milk and its products and devise corrective actions/strategies and suggest a way forward. The rationale behind choosing milk is due to its indispensable role in our

**Two more cheetah cubs die at Kuno Park; one unwell**

Experts say it could be due to extreme heat, inadequate nourishment, one cub died on Tuesday; the remaining cub born to translocated Namibian cheetah is underweight and under observation

Jacob Koshy  
NEW DELHI

Two more cheetah cubs die and one is unwell at the Kuno National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh. One cub died on Tuesday. The extreme heat and the lack of adequate nutrition have likely contributed to the death of the two-month-old cubs, say experts associated with the cheetah reintroduction project. With this, only one cub of the litter of four born to the Namibian cheetah, Inala is now alive.



Cheetah deaths at Kuno

Cheetah	Date of death	Reason
Sasha	March 27	Kidney ailment
Lalzy	April 23	Cardiopulmonary failure
Daksha	May 9	Injury from a violent interaction
Three cubs born to Inala	May 23	Weakness/ extreme weather

Three adult cheetahs died since 20 of the animals were relocated from Namibia and South Africa to the park, in an experiment at establishing a contrary mother and given palliative care. Unfortunately, two more died than evening itself." J.S. Chauhan, Chief Wildlife Warden, Madhya Pradesh, told The Hindu. These two deaths were, however, made public only on Thursday.

"The third cub is now under observation. She is underweight and our plan is to take care of it for at least a month, till it reaches its expected weight. In the past two days, she recovered well, though still unwell," Mr. Chauhan said. After a month, wildlife officials will attempt reuniting the cub with its mother.

Cheetah cubs, in the wild, reportedly have a survival rate of 10% with roughly the same fraction

making it to adulthood, a press release from the Environment Ministry noted on Wednesday.

"Weakest of big cats" Omkar Churesh, scientist at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, said India's cheetah reintroduction plan was premised on having the animals establish a sustainable population under wild conditions.

"Cheetahs have a naturally high mortality and are the weakest of the big cats. We only intervene under extreme conditions and in this case, the animals were bonding and following their mother around. In nature, births and death are inevitable," he told The Hindu. "So far, what we have observed isn't too far off of the ordinary," said Dr. Chauhan, who is involved with the cheetah programme.

"Since the adult female, was a 'hand-reared' cheetah, a month of observation was her first litter of cubs." "It's also possible that she was inexperienced and unable to nourish all the cubs adequately. Add to that the extreme heat," Mr. Chauhan added.

**New committee to keep watch on cheetah project**

Jacob Koshy  
NEW DELHI

Following the death of three cheetah cubs this week, the Centre on Thursday appointed a new steering committee, comprising national and international experts, to oversee the implementation of Project Cheetah.

The cubs were born to a translocated Namibian cheetah at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh in March 2022. The 11-member Cheetah Project Steering Committee will be led by Rajesh Gopal, secretary-general, Central Tiger Forum and formerly of the India Forest Service and closely associated with Project Tiger.

The committee's mandate is to monitor the progress of the cheetah reintroduction programme and advise the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department and the National Tiger Conservation Authority to decide on opening up the cheetah habitat for eco-tourism. Several of the international experts have been involved in the cheetah translocation project from Namibia and South Africa.

International and national experts are part of the panel formed in the wake of Kuno cub deaths

The committee will be in force for two years and will convene at least one meeting every month, besides conducting field visits to the Kuno National Park.

The members include scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun; some experts from the NTCA; and the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department.

Also on the committee are international experts, including Adrian Tordiffe, veterinary wildlife specialist, University of Pretoria, South Africa; Laurie Marker, Cheetah Conservation Fund, Namibia; Andrew John Fraser, Farm Olivenbosch, South Africa; and the manager, Cheetah Metapopulation Project, The Metapopulation Initiative, South Africa.

Several of the international experts have been involved in the cheetah translocation project from Namibia and South Africa.

**Multiple, back-to-back exams on a day leave CUET applicants stressed**

Mahiri Porecha  
Safina Begam  
NEW DELHI

Five days into the commencement of Common University Entrance Test (CUET), aspirant candidates are complaining that as many as seven subjects have been squeezed into their schedule on a single day, which has led to extreme stress. Bhoomi Goyal, 16, a Delhi University aspirant, will appear for seven exams under the CUET on May 30. Ms. Goyal is one of the nearly 15 lakh candidates from across India appearing for the CUET across 272 cities.

According to the city slip received by Ms. Goyal, she will have to appear for physical education, maths, English, Hindi, general test, legal studies and agriculture papers on a single day. "This means I will be writing exams from 7 a.m.



Put to rest: Students waiting in a queue in front of a CUET examination centre in New Delhi on Wednesday. sika/soochin

to up to 9 p.m. How is this humanly possible?" Ms. Goyal told The Hindu. "Incessant delays in supplying city slips and admit cards to students have also left them high and dry. "While the National Testing Agency (NTA) had promised to give city slips on April 30, they later provided these only on May 14, that too for first phase applicants who were supposed to appear for exams

between May 21 and 24. This poses a problem for students who have to plan their travel in advance to appear for exams," said Ms. Goyal's uncle Vipul Anand.

Health issues: Another aspirant, 18-year-old Nancy, scheduled to appear for six papers, is suffering from health issues and is sceptical about how she will perform in

the tests. "My doctor warned me against sitting still for more than an hour because I have spondylitis, and I'm unsure how I will be able to sit and write all six papers on that specific day," said Ms. Nancy Damini, 18, who appeared for CUET on May 21 in Sector 52, Noida, said her exams got delayed by at least two hours.

"Up to four students fainted in the scorching heat while waiting for water supply or air conditioning," she alleged. A total of 2,65,248 students appeared for CUET-UG in the first phase which was held between May 21 and 24.

In 296 centres, nearly 12 out of 450, the exams started later than scheduled due to power fluctuations, students needing to follow staggered entry and so on," said M. Jagadeesh Kumar, Chairman, University Grants Commission.

**Congress asks why haste in rolling out fortified rice**

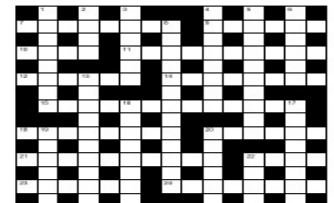
The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi government rolled out fortified rice under the public distribution system (PDS) without ascertaining the ill-effects of such rice on the health of 80 crore beneficiaries, the Congress alleged on Thursday.

Several of the international experts have been involved in the cheetah translocation project from Namibia and South Africa.

Several of the international experts have been involved in the cheetah translocation project from Namibia and South Africa.

**THE CROSSWORD 13875**



- 12 Fanatics run away from acquaintances (6)
- 14 Fight to stop guard working without uniform in holy place (8)
- 15 Cool van in a spot of danger (6,7)
- 18 Doctor had a nice ranch (8)
- 20 Group is so glibble about acetate chat (6)
- 21 Thought of boss supporter in bad weather (10)
- 22 Bachelor leaving lounge for maden's show (4)
- 23 Sheeld leader of UP state assembly (6)
- 24 Poet composing sonnet enters into State (8)
- Down
- 1 Spanish girl working in a store (8)
- 2 Nadal returns from a long distance (4)
- 3 These are seen on Snakes and Ladders (6)
- 4 Country's President - a good man or criminal? (8)
- 5 Classified French and German articles vocally criticize society (5,5)
- 6 Bell's occupation (6)
- 8 In a scuffle when members of parliament keep mum? (4,4,1,4)
- 13 Over time, I turn to exercise with promises to be healthy (10)
- 15 Disappears from Shiv Sena (8)
- 17 Operation after love failure (6)
- 19 Both sides lost? Game over! (6)
- 20 Imagine wandering without a sign (6)
- 22 Illusion in Ramayana (4)

**SUDOKU**



Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

**FAITH**

**Three births as demons**

Anger can only lead to self destruction. Even great sages and saints have been intemperate. Our Bhagavatha Purana says that as with God's many avatars, His presence on earth as Naraha also teaches us many lessons. One of these is the importance of conquering anger, which goes against the grain of leading a virtuous life, said Dharmaraj Ramanathan in a discourse. Brahma's four sons, Sankha, Sanathana, Sanadhana and Sanath Kumara were expected to help in an creation. However, their minds were focused only on God and on attaining moksha; to this end they reached Vaikunta, with the intention of being in His presence. At the portal, the two dwarapalaks, Jaya and Vijaya, prevented them from entering. Incensed at what they perceived as high-handedness, the four brothers cursed them to be born on earth.

After hearing both sides, Vishnu informed the dwarapalaks that they should have permitted the sibilings to enter; further, having been the reason for making them curse, the two gatekeepers had only two choices: they could be born a hundred times as His devotees and lead a devout life. Or, they could opt for three births as demons and Vishnu Himself would take avatar to vanquish them in combat. The two dwarapalaks immediately choose to be born as asuras, since they were eager to return to Vaikunta at the earliest. As per Vishnu's dispensation, the two dwarapalaks were born with negative qualities such as krodha, kama and lobha. Signifying the first, we know them as Hiranyakasipu and Hiranyakubha in the second as Kavana and Kumbhakarna and in the final one as Sisupala and Danavakra.



# Two more cheetah cubs die at Kuno Park; one unwell

Experts say it could be due to extreme heat, inadequate nourishment; one cub died on Tuesday; the remaining cub born to translocated Namibian cheetah is underweight and under observation

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

**T**wo more cheetah cubs died and one is unwell at the Kuno National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh. One cub died on Tuesday.

The extreme heat and the lack of adequate nutrition have likely contributed to the death of the two-month-old cubs, say experts associated with the cheetah reintroduction project. With this, only one cub of the litter of four born to the Namibian cheetah Jwala is now alive.

### 3 adult cheetahs dead

Three adult cheetahs died since 20 of the animals were relocated from Namibia and South Africa to the park, in an experiment at establishing a community of cheetahs.

On May 23, following the death of one of the cubs in the morning, a team of veterinarians observed that the remaining three were unwell.

"It was extremely hot, close to 46-47 degrees Celsius, and the cubs are entirely reliant on their mother for nutrition. The three

## Cheetah deaths at Kuno

Three adult cheetahs and three cubs died since 20 of the big cats were relocated from Namibia and South Africa to the Kuno National Park



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ailing cubs were immediately taken from their mother and given palliative care. Unfortunately, two more died that evening itself," J.S. Chauhan, Chief Wildlife Warden, Madhya Pradesh, told *The Hindu*. These two deaths were, however, made public only on Thursday.

"The third cub is now under observation. She is underweight and our plan

is to take care of it for at least a month, till it reaches its expected weight. In the past two days, she recovered well, though still unwell," Mr. Chauhan said.

After a month, wildlife officials will attempt reuniting the cub with its mother.

Cheetah cubs, in the wild, reportedly have a survival rate of 10% with roughly the same fraction

making it to adulthood, a press release from the Environment Ministry noted on Wednesday.

### 'Weakest of big cats'

Qamar Qureshi, scientist at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, said India's cheetah reintroduction plan was premised on having the animals establish a sustainable population under wild conditions.

"Cheetahs have a naturally high mortality and are the weakest of the big cats. We only intervene under extreme conditions and in this case, the animals were bonding and following their mother around. In nature, births and death are inevitable," he told *The Hindu*. "So far, what we have observed isn't too far out of the ordinary," said Dr. Qureshi, who is involved with the cheetah programme.

Jwala, the adult female, was a "hand-reared" cheetah from Namibia and this was her first litter of cubs. "It's also possible that she was inexperienced and unable to nourish all the cubs adequately. Add to that the extreme heat," Mr. Chauhan added.

# New committee to keep watch on cheetah project

**Jacob Koshy**

NEW DELHI

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The cubs were born to a translocated Namibian cheetah at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh in March 2023.

The 11-member Cheetah Project Steering Committee will be led by Rajesh Gopal, secretary-general, Global Tiger Forum and formerly of the India Forest Service and closely associated with Project Tiger.

## **Field visits**

The committee's mandate is to monitor the progress of the cheetah reintroduction programme and advise the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department and the National Tiger Conservation Authority; to decide on opening up the cheetah habitat for eco-tourism and, suggest regulations in this regard, and to suggest ways to involve the local community in the project activities.

## **International and national experts are part of the panel formed in the wake of Kuno cub deaths**

The committee will be in force for two years and will convene at least one meeting every month, besides conducting field visits to the Kuno National Park.

The members include scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun; some experts from the NTCA; and the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department.

Also on the committee are international experts, including Adrian Tordiffe, veterinary wildlife specialist, University of Pretoria, South Africa; Laurie Marker, Cheetah Conservation Fund, Namibia; Andrew John Fraser, Farm Olievenbosch, South Africa; and Vincent van dan Merwe, manager, Cheetah Metapopulation Project, The Metapopulation Initiative, South Africa.

Several of the international experts have been involved in the cheetah translocation project from Namibia and South Africa.

## Manipur clashes due to HC order... all will get justice: Shah in Assam



Amid the curfew in Imphal on Thursday. **PTI** REPORT, **PAGE 13**

**SUKRITA BARUAH**  
GUWAHATI, MAY 25

IN HIS first public statement on the violent clashes that broke out in Manipur earlier this month, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday pinned responsibility on the Manipur High Court (HC) order which asked the state government to submit a recom-

mendation to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the Meitei community.

"Manipur mein ek aadhaar ke judgment ke karan kuch clashes hua hai (in Manipur, some clashes have happened because of a judgment by a court)," Shah said.

"My appeal to all brothers and sisters in Manipur, for six years we have all moved forward

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## Kerala, TN, Telangana top states in Covid year, Delhi worst UT: Health index

**NIIT Aayog report was to be out by Dec 2022, not been made public yet**

**HARIKISHAN SHARMA**  
NEW DELHI, MAY 25

THE THREE southern states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana emerged as the top performers among the 'larger states' in the NIIT Aayog's annual 'health index' for the Covid year of 2020-21, The Indian Express has learnt. While Tripura was the best among the 'smaller states'.

Delhi ranked at the bottom of the Union territories' list.

The annual health index, which measures the performance of states and UTs on a 'weighted composite score incorporating 24 health performance indicators', was launched by the NIIT Aayog in 2017. The Aayog brings out the index in collaboration with the Union Health Ministry and World Bank.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



## NIGHT LANDING MILESTONE

A MIG-29K fighter jet makes a night landing on INS Vikram, in what the Navy called a 'historic milestone' indicative of its impetus towards "Aatmanirbharta". Officials said the night landing test was held on Wednesday night. **PTI**

## Four men get 7 years in jail in 2018 Alwar lynching case

**HAMZA KHAN**  
JAIPUR, MAY 25

A LOCAL court in Rajasthan's Alwar on Thursday sentenced four men to seven years' imprisonment and acquitted one person in the 2018 Rakbar Khan lynching case, marking the state's first convictions in a lynching on suspicion of cattle smuggling. Rakbar Khan died after being assaulted by a mob in Alwar's Lalwadi on the intervening night of July 20 and 21, 2018, when he and another man, Aslam Khan, were transporting cows.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## Amul vs TN's Aavin now: Stalin writes to Centre

**ARUN JANARDHANAN & HARISH DAMODARAN**  
CHENNAI, NEW DELHI, MAY 25



Move will create unhealthy competition, says TN CM

AFTER KARNATAKA, it is Tamil Nadu that seems set to emerge as a political theatre for cooperative milk wars. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin has written to Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah to "warn" Amul (the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation) to "desist from procuring milk from Aavin's (Tamil Nadu Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation) milk shed area" nurtured in true cooperative spirit over decades.

Stalin, it has been a norm to identify politics to the arena of regional boards. AMUL, which had so far only been selling its products in TN, is also procuring milk now. It means more competition for Aavin. Beneath the surface, Stalin's resentment seems to be taking identity politics to the arena of regional boards.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## INAUGURATION OF PARLIAMENT BUILDING Boost for Govt: BSP, TDP, JD(S) oppose boycott

Petty politics, says Shah; desire for self-promotion: Cong

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MAY 25

A DAY after 20 Opposition parties announced their decision to skip the inauguration of the new Parliament building by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 28, the political war of words over the issue intensified on Thursday as more non-NDA parties — including the BSP, TDP and JKS — opposed the boycott.

While Home Minister Amit Shah accused the Congress and other Opposition parties of indulging in "petty politics" and "insulting" the mandate of the people, the Congress said "one man's ego and desire for self-promotion" has denied the first tribal woman President her Constitutional privilege to inaugurate the complex.

Meanwhile, BSP chief Mayawati said the decision to boycott was "inappropriate". In

**BUSINESS AS USUAL**

By UNNY



A series of tweets in Hindi, she said: "Whether it was a Congress government at the Centre in the past or the BJP at present, our party has always supported them on issues related to the country and public interest, rising above party lines. We welcome the inauguration of the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

**WAR OF WORDS**

"Congress and its partners are indulging in petty politics." **AMIT SHAH (BJP)**

"Arrogance of your (Modi) gov't has destroyed parliamentary systems." **MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (CONG)**

"Boycott call is inappropriate... Gov't built it, has the right to unveil it." **MAYAWATI (BSP)**

"Belongs to country... cannot bring politics into matter of the Constitution." **H D DEVE GOWDA (JD-S)**

## Rs 5 lakh per visit, a code: How Pak mar sailed to India with mothership of drugs

**MAHENDER SINGH MANIAL**  
NEW DELHI, MAY 25

TRIPS TO India, Africa, Indonesia, the Maldives and Sri Lanka that lasted nearly 20 days each and Rs 5 lakh per visit. Pakistan national Zubair Derakhshandeh, 29, supplied drugs to several countries as a member of the in-

famous Haji Salim drug cartel for five years. On May 13, it was on one such trip to India that he was arrested in a joint operation by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Indian Navy in the international waters, off the coast of Kochi.

Zubair was caught with 132 bags containing suspected contraband. Weighing 2,520 kg, the haul contained "high-purity

methamphetamine" worth around Rs 25,000 crore. An NCB official remarked that it was the most "superior quality" methamphetamine they have ever come across in the illegal drug market.

An official said, "Zubair, a native of Pakistan's Balochista province, worked for a business man who has served

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

**BESTECH ALTURA**  
SECTOR 79, GURUGRAM

ACTIVE HOMES FOR *active* LIVING

SERENE ARAVALLI VIEW

LUSH GREEN LANDSCAPE

MINI SOCCER GROUND

4 GOLF COURSES IN PROXIMITY

OPEN AIR/OVER WATER CABANAS

TENNIS COURT

CHILDREN PLAY AREA

BASKETBALL COURT

SCAN FOR MORE DETAILS

**3 BHK-2015 SQ. FT (187.2 SQ. M) | PRICE 1.74 CR ONWARDS**

# Kerala, TN, Telangana top states in Covid year, Delhi worst UT: Health index

NITI Aayog report was to be out by Dec 2022, not been made public yet

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**HARIKISHAN SHARMA**

NEW DELHI, MAY 25

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Delhi ranked at the bottom of the Union territories' list.

The annual health index, which measures the performance of states and UTs on a "weighted composite score incorporating 24 health performance indicators", was launched by the NITI Aayog in 2017. The Aayog brings out the index in collaboration with the Union Health Ministry and World Bank.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## ● Kerala, TN, Telangana top states in Covid yr: Report

While the 2020-21 (fifth) health index report was supposed to be released by December 2022, it has not been made public yet. The NITI Aayog is learnt to have shared the report – Healthy States Progressive India Report on the Ranks of States and Union Territories – with the Health Ministry.

When contacted, a NITI Aayog official said the report would be “released in due course”.

The health index assesses states and UTs on two parameters – incremental performance (year-on-year progress) and overall performance. The states and UTs – categorised separately as ‘larger states’, ‘smaller states’ and UTs – are then ranked based on their scores.

Among the 19 ‘larger states’, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have emerged as the top three performers, occupying first, second and third place respectively, in terms of overall performance. Bihar (19th), Uttar Pradesh (18th) and Madhya Pradesh (17th) are at the bottom of the list.

In terms of incremental performance, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Odisha emerged as the top three performers in 2020-21, as compared to their performance in

2019-20.

Among the eight smaller states, Tripura has recorded the best overall performance, followed by Sikkim and Goa; Arunachal Pradesh (6th), Nagaland (7th) and Manipur (8th) are at the bottom.

And among the eight UTs, Lakshadweep has been ranked as the top performer in terms of overall performance, while Delhi ranked at the bottom.

In the last (fourth) health index report for 2019-20, released on December 27, 2021, Kerala and Tamil Nadu were ranked as top overall performers among the larger states. Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Assam were the top three states in terms of annual incremental performance.

Among smaller states, Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim took the top three slots in terms of overall performance, while Manipur (6th), Arunachal Pradesh (7th) and Nagaland (8th) were at the bottom in 2019-20. Among the UTs, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu were at the top, while Andaman & Nicobar Islands was last.

According to a statement issued by the NITI Aayog on December 27, 2021, the health in-

dex is an “annual tool to assess the performance” of states and UTs. “It is a weighted composite index based on 24 indicators grouped under the domains of ‘health outcomes’, ‘governance and information’, and ‘key inputs/ processes’. Each domain has been assigned weight based on its importance with higher score for outcome indicators,” it said.

The ‘health outcomes’ include indicators like neonatal mortality rate, total fertility rate, sex ratio at birth, immunisation coverage, proportion of institutional deliveries, total case notification rate of tuberculosis, and proportion of people living with HIV on anti-retroviral therapy. The ‘key inputs/ processes’ is a measure of health infrastructure available, including proportion of functional 24X7 primary healthcare centres, districts with functional cardiac care units, and vacancies in healthcare provider positions.

The ‘governance and information’ domain includes indicators like proportion of institutional deliveries, average occupancy (in months) of three key posts at state level, average occupancy (in months) of the chief medical officer, and days taken for fund transfer.

# NITI Aayog

## Government Agency overview

<b>Formed</b>	1 January 2015; 8 years ago
<b>Preceding Government Agency</b>	Planning Commission
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	Government of India
<b>Headquarters</b>	New Delhi
<b>Annual budget</b>	₹400.65 crores (US\$48+ million) (2020–21) <sup>[1]</sup> including Ministry of Planning
<b>Government Agency executives</b>	Narendra Modi, Chairperson Suman K. Berry, Vice Chairperson B. V. R. Subrahmanyam, CEO
<b>Parent Government Agency</b>	Ministry of Planning

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What are the Initiatives of NITI Aayog?

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**SDG India Index**

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**Composite Water Management Index**

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**Atal Innovation Mission**

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**SATH Project.**

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**Aspirational District Programme**

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**School Education Quality Index**

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[District Hospital Index](#)



[Health Index](#)



[Agriculture Marketing And Farmer Friendly reform Index](#)



[India Innovation Index](#)



[Women Transforming India Awards](#)



[Good Governance Index](#)



# New era dawned in last 9 years, sport now seen as attractive profession: PM

**MAULSHREE SETH**

LUCKNOW, MAY 25

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi Thursday said that in the past nine years, a new sporting era has dawned that is empowering the society through the medium of sport. Modi was speaking after virtually inaugurating the 'Khelo India University Games' through video conferencing.

Reminding the gathering about the controversy-hit 2010 Commonwealth Games during the tenure of the erstwhile UPA government, the PM alleged that lack of interest by the previous government at the Centre to develop sports infrastructure led to apprehension among sportspersons and their families about taking up sports as a career in the past. Modi added that he is happy that this situation has changed now and claimed that sportspersons, especially a large number of women, are participating and excelling in sports.

He also assured sportspersons that the Government would stand with them in every step.



**Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at Khelo India event that was virtually inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in Lucknow on Thursday. *Express***

Modi said, "In the past 9 years, a new era of sports began in India that is not just about making India a new power in sports but also is

an era of empowering society through the medium of sports.

Pointing out that this edition of the Games would conclude in

his parliamentary constituency, Varanasi, the PM added that nearly 4,000 sportspersons are participating.



<b>Abbreviation</b>	KIUG
<b>First event</b>	2020, in <a href="#">Bhubaneswar, Odisha</a>
<b>Occur every</b>	Annual
<b>Purpose</b>	Multi-sport events across Indian universities
<b>Headquarters</b>	<a href="#">New Delhi</a>
<b>Organisations</b>	<a href="#">Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="#">Khelo India University Games</a> ↗



- The 10-day multi-sport event will be held in Lucknow, Varanasi, Greater Noida and Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. Shooting events will be held in Delhi.
- The third edition of the Khelo India University Games will feature around 4,000 athletes from some 200 Universities from across the country. All athletes will be in the under-27 category and will vie for medals in 21 sports. Rowing is making its KIUG debut.

- The Babu Banarasi Das University in Lucknow will be converted into a Sports Village for the duration of the Khelo India University Games 2023.
- Swimmer [Siva Sridhar](#) of Jain University won the most number of individual medals – seven golds and two silvers – at KIUG 2021.

# Germany, world's fourth largest economy, slides into recession

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

BERLIN, MAY 25

THE GERMAN economy shrank unexpectedly in the first three months of this year, marking the second quarter of contraction that is one definition of recession.

Data released Thursday by the Federal Statistical Office shows Germany's gross domestic product, or GDP, declined by 0.3% in period from January to March. This follows a drop of 0.5% in world's fourth biggest economy during last quarter of 2022.

Two consecutive quarters of

**EXPLAINED**

**E** **Problem for power**

THE FIGURES are a blow to the government, which last month doubled its growth forecast for 2023 after a feared winter energy crunch failed. It said the economy would grow by 0.4% — from a 0.2% hike predicted in January — a forecast that may need to be revised downward.

contraction is a common definition of recession, though economists on the euro area business cycle dating committee use broader data set, including employment figures. Germany is one of 20 countries that use Euro.

Employment in the country rose in the first quarter and inflation has eased, but higher interest rates will keep weighing on spending and investment, said Franziska Palmas, senior Europe economist for Capital Economics.

Economists said high inflation hit consumer spending, with prices in April 7.2% higher than a year ago.

## MOVE TO PROCURE MILK FROM THE STATE SEEN AS A THREAT TO LOCAL BRAND AAVIN

# Utterly bitterly fight over Amul, this time in Tamil Nadu

SAJAN C KUMAR, ABHINAY KUMAR & VIVEAT SUSAN PINTO  
Chennai/Ahmedabad/Mumbai,  
May 25

**AMUL, THE COUNTRY'S** top dairy brand, is caught in the centre of a storm once again, following its move to procure milk from Tamil Nadu (TN). Last month, Amul, which is marketed by the Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), had stirred up a controversy after it entered the Bengaluru market, which is dominated by local brand Nandini from the Karnataka Milk Federation.

While in TN, Amul has been selling its products for some time through local outlets, the move to procure milk from the state, using its

### IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

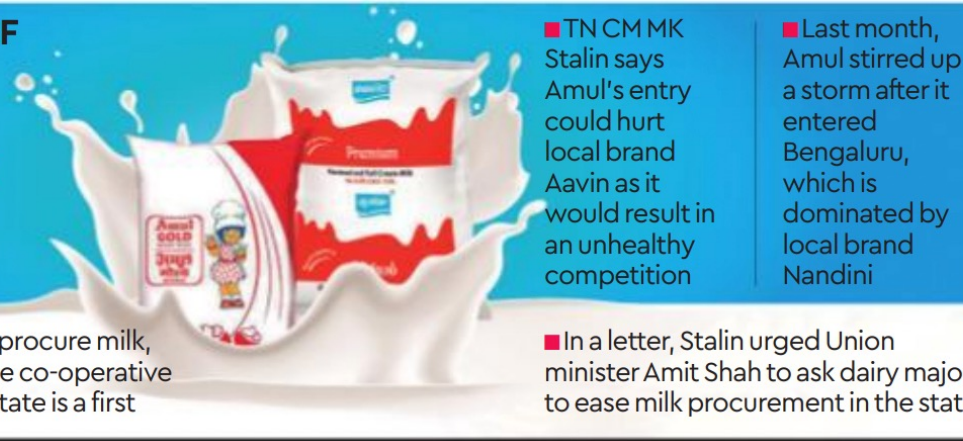
■ Amul has been selling its products in Tamil Nadu for some time through local outlets

■ But the move to procure milk, using its multi-state co-operative licence, from the state is a first

multi-state co-operative licence is a first. Fearing that Amul's entry in TN would be detrimental to local brand Aavin, state's chief minister MK Stalin on Thursday asked Union

home minister Amit Shah, who also holds the co-operative portfolio, to ask the dairy major to cease milk procurement in the state.

"It has come to our notice that the



■ TN CM MK Stalin says Amul's entry could hurt local brand Aavin as it would result in an unhealthy competition

■ In a letter, Stalin urged Union minister Amit Shah to ask dairy major to ease milk procurement in the state

■ Last month, Amul stirred up a storm after it entered Bengaluru, which is dominated by local brand Nandini

Kaira District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union (Amul) has utilised its multi-state co-operative licence to install chilling centres and a processing plant in the Krishnagiri district. It

has planned to procure milk through farmer producer organisations (FPOs) and self-help groups in and around Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupathur, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts in our state," Stalin said in a letter to Shah.

This, he said, could hurt Aavin as it would result in an unhealthy competition between the co-operatives. "Regional co-operatives have been the bedrock of dairy development in the states. They are better equipped to interact with and support producers, as well as to protect consumers from arbitrary price increases," he said, adding that cross-procurement was against the spirit of the co-operative movement.

Jayen Mehta, MD, GCMMF, said there was no threat to local brands

with their milk procurement in TN. "I don't know what the issue is about. But the idea is to co-exist, not compete with co-operatives," he said.

Speaking to *FE*, Ashwin Chaudhary, senior manager, milk procurement, project and vigilance, Dudhsagar Dairy, which is one of the 21 district milk cooperatives of GCMMF, said there was no issue of unhealthy competition.

"How can the increasing number of players in an industry create unhealthy competition? Rather it will give the farmers the opportunity to choose the cooperative which is giving them a better price. And as I get it, this is what is called healthy competition," he said.

**Continued on Page 9**

# TVS' R Dinesh is new CII president, ITC chief Puri president-designate

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
New Delhi, May 25

**TVS SUPPLY CHAIN** Solutions executive vice chairman R Dinesh has assumed office as president of CII for 2023-24, the industry body said on Thursday. He takes over from Sanjiv Bajaj, CMD, Bajaj Finserv.

ITC CMD Sanjiv Puri takes over as president-designate, while Ernst & Young's India region chairman Rajiv Memani takes over as vice president for 2023-24.

CII elected the new office-bearers for the year on Thursday.



TVC Supply Chain Solutions executive vice chairman R Dinesh and (right) ITC chairman and managing director Sanjiv Puri



<b>Abbreviation</b>	CII
<b>Predecessor</b>	Confederation of Engineering Industry
<b>Formation</b>	1895; 128 years ago
<b>Type</b>	<a href="#">Non-governmental trade association</a>
<b>Purpose</b>	<a href="#">Policy advocacy</a>
<b>Headquarters</b>	<a href="#">New Delhi</a> , India
<b>Coordinates</b>	<span><span><span><span><span>28°35′09.5″N</span> <span>77°13′36.0″E</span></span></span><span><span>﻿</span> / <span>﻿</span></span><span><span>28.585972°N 77.226667°E</span><span><span>﻿</span> / <span>28.585972; 77.226667</span></span></span></span></span>
<b>Area served</b>	Worldwide
<b>Services</b>	Business promotion, networking, policy reforms
<b>Members</b>	Direct 9,000+ Indirect 3,00,000
<b>President</b>	<a href="#">Sanjiv Bajaj</a> <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Director General</b>	<a href="#">Chandrajit Banerjee</a> <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Employees</b>	1100+



# PBR and Biodiversity Management in India

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The **National Campaign for Updation and Verification of People's Biodiversity Register (PBR)** was launched in **Goa**, marking a significant milestone in the **documentation and preservation of India's rich biological diversity**. It was organised by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

---

Till now, **2,67,608 PBRs** have been prepared in the country.

- What is the People's Biodiversity Register?
- **About:**
  - The **People's Biodiversity Register** serves as a **comprehensive record of various aspects of biodiversity**, including **conservation of habitats, preservation of land races, folk varieties, and cultivars**, domesticated stocks and breeds of animals, and micro-organisms.
  - **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC)** are created as per the **Biological Diversity Act 2002** for promoting conservation, sustainable use, and documentation of biological diversity.

- **Importance:**

- It helps in conserving biodiversity, which is key to maintaining balance in nature. It also enables local communities to share the benefits derived from **genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge**.
- It supports the **implementation of the provisions of the Biological Diversity Act 2002**, which aims to **regulate access to biological resources** and ensure fair and equitable benefit sharing.
- Being a **bottom-up exercise**, it is also a means of understanding the **overlap of cultural and natural biodiversity**.

- It aligns with the concept of “**Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE)**”, introduced by the Indian Prime Minister at **COP26 in Glasgow**.

# What is the Status of Biodiversity Management in India?

**About:**



**Challenges related to  
Biodiversity  
Conservation:**



**Introduction of  
Invasive Species**



**Global Warming and  
Climate Change**



**Choking Marine  
Biodiversity**



What is the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)?

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was negotiated and signed by nations at the [Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro](#) in Brazil on June 5, 1992.

- The convention came into force on **December 29, 1993**. **India became a party to the convention on February 18, 1994**. At the present, there are **196 Parties to this Convention**.


CBD is a legally binding treaty and has 3 main objectives:

# Health for All: WHO

Recently, the **WHO** in its 76<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly (WHA) has released a report titled- **“Health for All: Transforming economies to deliver what matters”**, recommending a roadmap to link health with sustainable growth.

The 76<sup>th</sup> **WHA** was held in Geneva, Switzerland and the theme was - **“WHO at 75: Saving Lives, Driving Health for All”**.

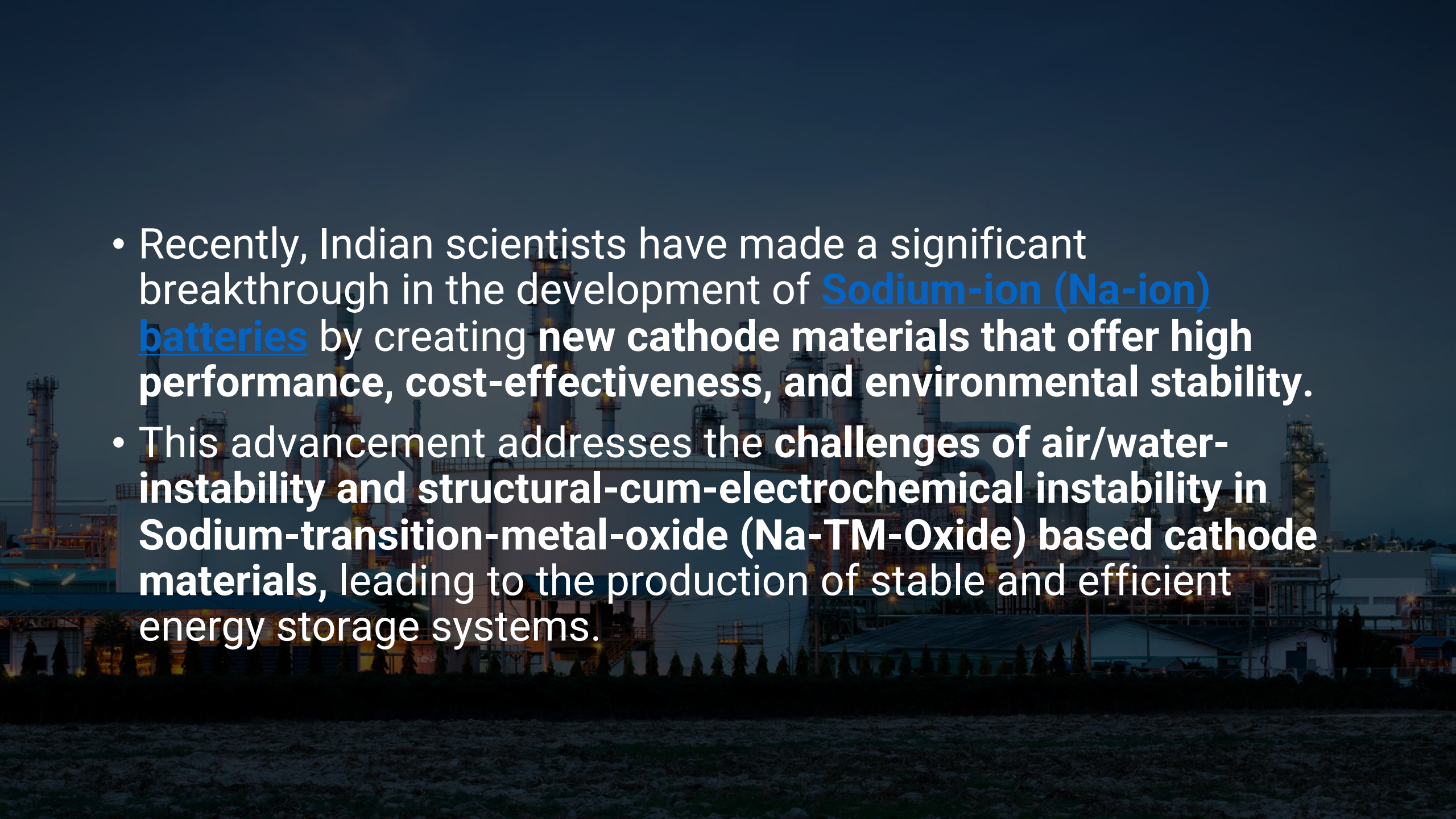
The report was launched by the **WHO Council on the Economics of Health (WCEH) for All**, which was formed in November 2020 in response to the **COVID**

- 
- What are the Highlights of the Report?
  - **Covid-19 a Global Failure:**
  - **Shortage of Health Workers**
  - **Climate Change**
  - **Health Expenditure**
  - **Health as a Human Right**



Advancements in Sodium-ion  
Batteries

Source: PIB

- 
- A background image of an industrial facility, possibly a refinery or chemical plant, at night. The scene is illuminated by various lights, including tall distillation columns and complex piping structures. The sky is dark, and the foreground shows some silhouettes of trees and a fence.
- Recently, Indian scientists have made a significant breakthrough in the development of **Sodium-ion (Na-ion) batteries** by creating new cathode materials that offer high performance, cost-effectiveness, and environmental stability.
  - This advancement addresses the challenges of air/water-instability and structural-cum-electrochemical instability in Sodium-transition-metal-oxide (Na-TM-Oxide) based cathode materials, leading to the production of stable and efficient energy storage systems.

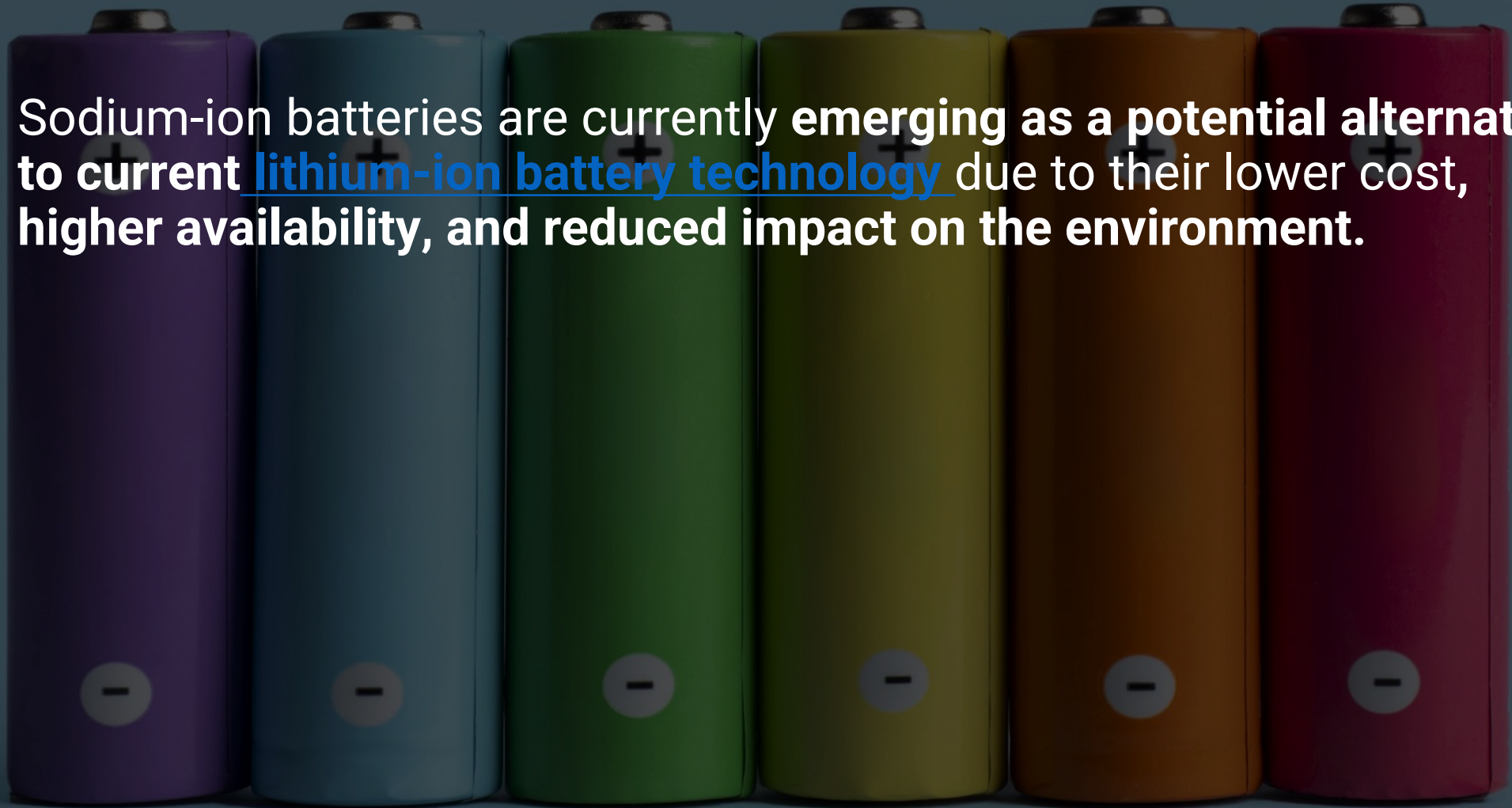
Cathode material is the electrode where sodium ions are stored during the battery's discharge process.

- It is responsible for the electrochemical reactions that allow the flow of electrical current.

The newly developed cathode materials are known for being air/water-stable and high-performance.

- They exhibit high electrochemical cyclic stability and stability upon exposure to air/water.

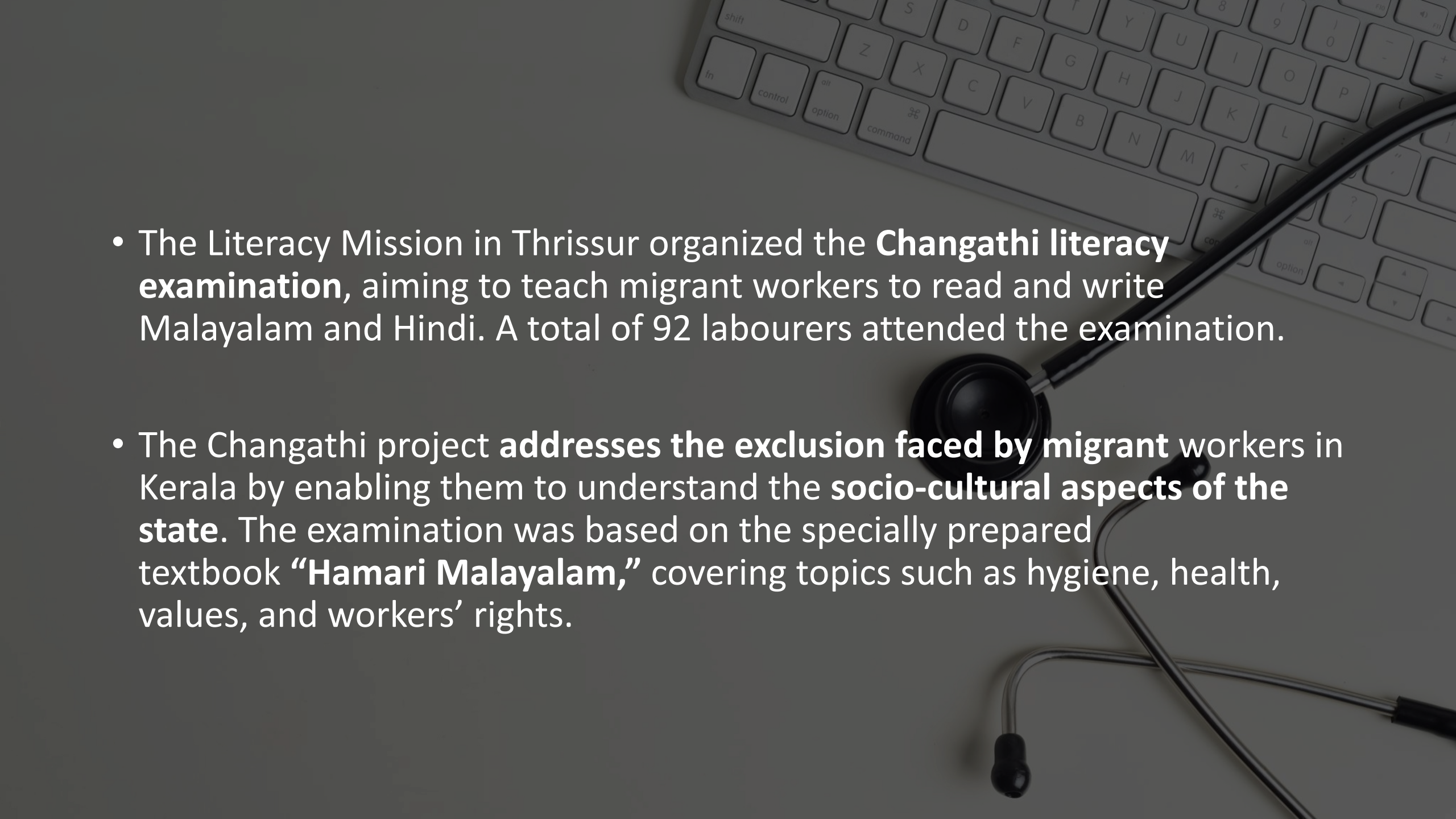
- Sodium-ion batteries are currently emerging as a potential alternative to current [lithium-ion battery technology](#) due to their lower cost, higher availability, and reduced impact on the environment.





# Changathi literacy examination

Source: TH

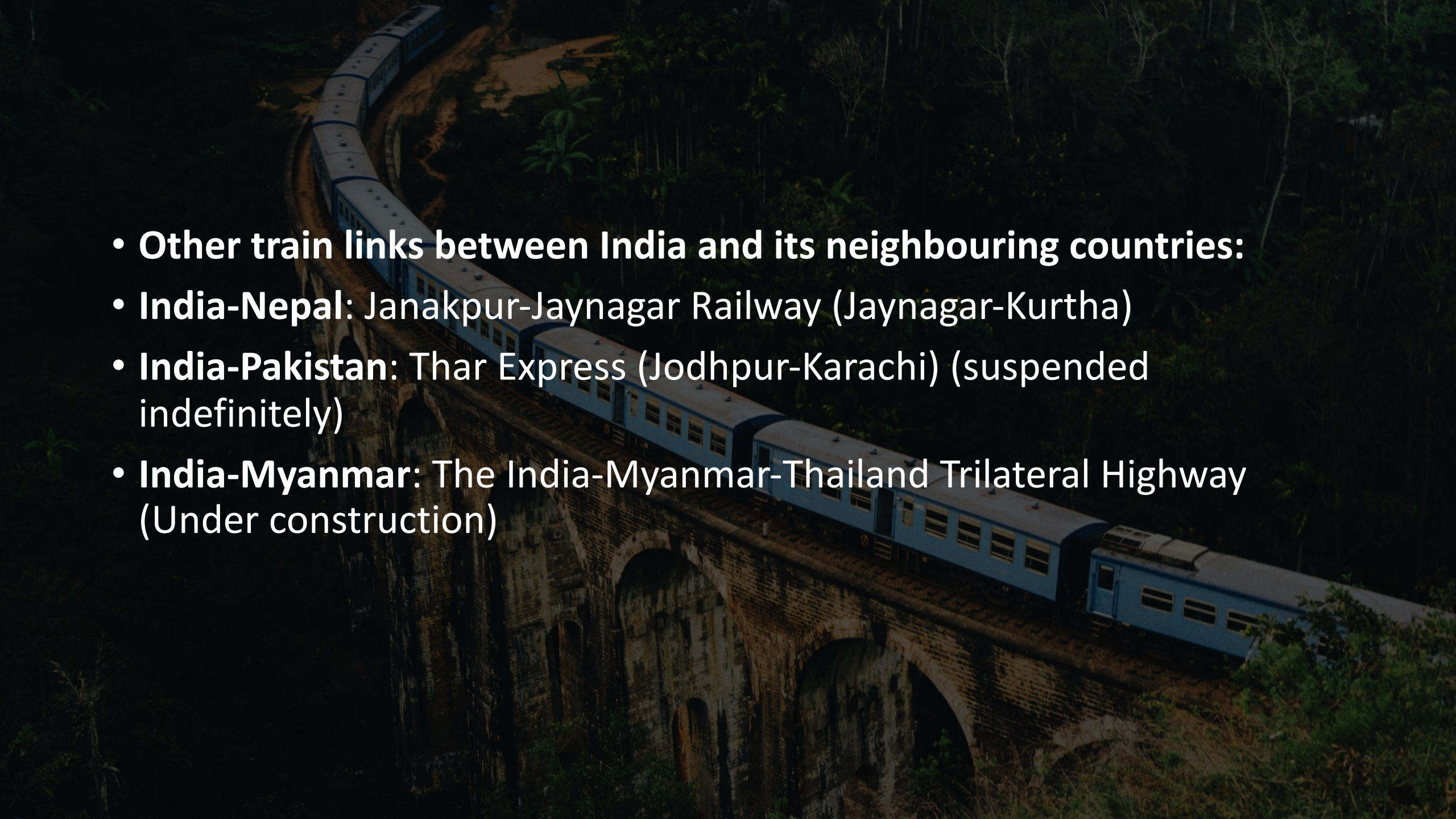
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- The Literacy Mission in Thrissur organized the **Changathi literacy examination**, aiming to teach migrant workers to read and write Malayalam and Hindi. A total of 92 labourers attended the examination.
  - The Changathi project **addresses the exclusion faced by migrant workers** in Kerala by enabling them to understand the **socio-cultural aspects of the state**. The examination was based on the specially prepared textbook “**Hamari Malayalam**,” covering topics such as hygiene, health, values, and workers’ rights.



# India-Bangladesh rail link

Source: TH

- 
- A blue passenger train is crossing a stone bridge over a river in a forested area. The train consists of several blue passenger coaches. The bridge is made of stone and has several arches. The surrounding area is lush with green trees and vegetation.
- The Indian Ministry of Railways has **handed over 20 Broad Gauge locomotives** to Bangladesh to support the **increasing volume of passenger and freight train operations.**
  - Currently, **three pairs of passenger trains** operate between [India-Bangladesh](#). These are:
    - Kolkata-Dhaka: **Maitree Express**
    - Kolkata-Khulna: **Bandhan Express**
    - New Jalpaiguri- Dhaka: **Mitali Express**

- 
- A blue train is crossing a stone viaduct in a forest. The train consists of several blue passenger cars. The viaduct is made of dark stone and has several arches. The forest is dense with green trees and foliage. The scene is captured from an elevated perspective, showing the train as it moves across the bridge.
- **Other train links between India and its neighbouring countries:**
  - **India-Nepal:** Janakpur-Jaynagar Railway (Jaynagar-Kurtha)
  - **India-Pakistan:** Thar Express (Jodhpur-Karachi) (suspended indefinitely)
  - **India-Myanmar:** The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway (Under construction)



AI Supercomputer 'AIRAWAT'

Source: PIB

The AI supercomputer '**AIRAWAT**,' located at **C-DAC** in Pune, India, has achieved a **ranking of 75th in the world** on the Top 500 Global Supercomputing List.

**Significance:** This recognition places India among the top AI supercomputing nations globally.

<b>Maximum</b>	<b>China has the maximum</b> number of supercomputers globally, followed by the United States, Japan, France, Germany, Netherlands, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.
<b>Supercomputers in India</b>	India's <b>first supercomputer was PARAM 8000</b> . It was followed by PARAM Shivay, PARAM Shakti, PARAM Brahma, PARAM Yukti, and PARAM Sanganak, installed at various institutions in India.
<b>Previous <a href="#">AI</a> supercomputer ranking</b>	In 2020, <b>PARAM Siddhi</b> , the High-Performance Computing-Artificial Intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer, achieved a global ranking of <b>62nd among the Top 500 most powerful supercomputer</b> systems in the world.



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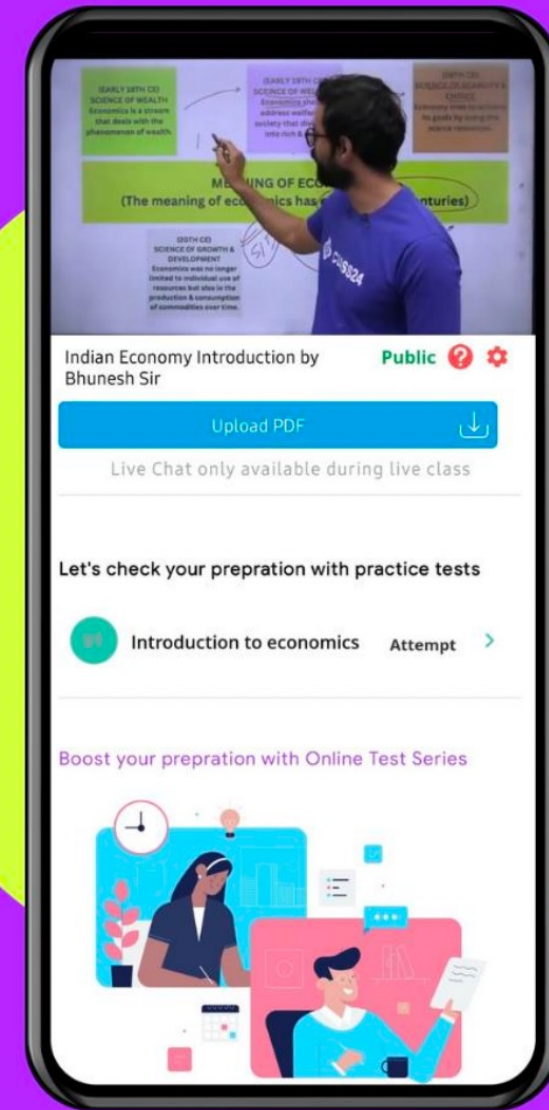
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Thank you  
guys, see you  
tomorrow

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