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BY BHUNESH SIR
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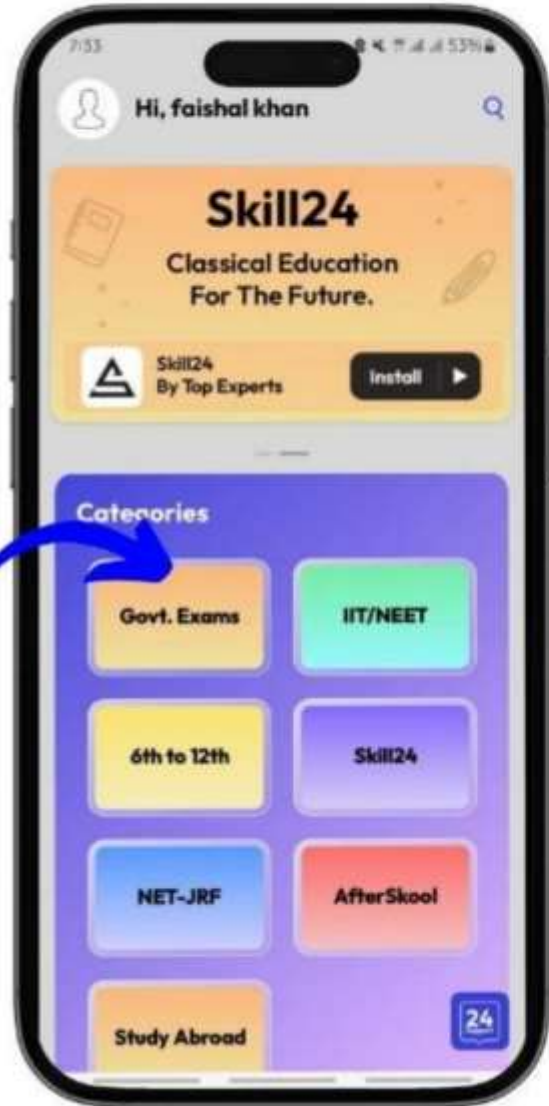
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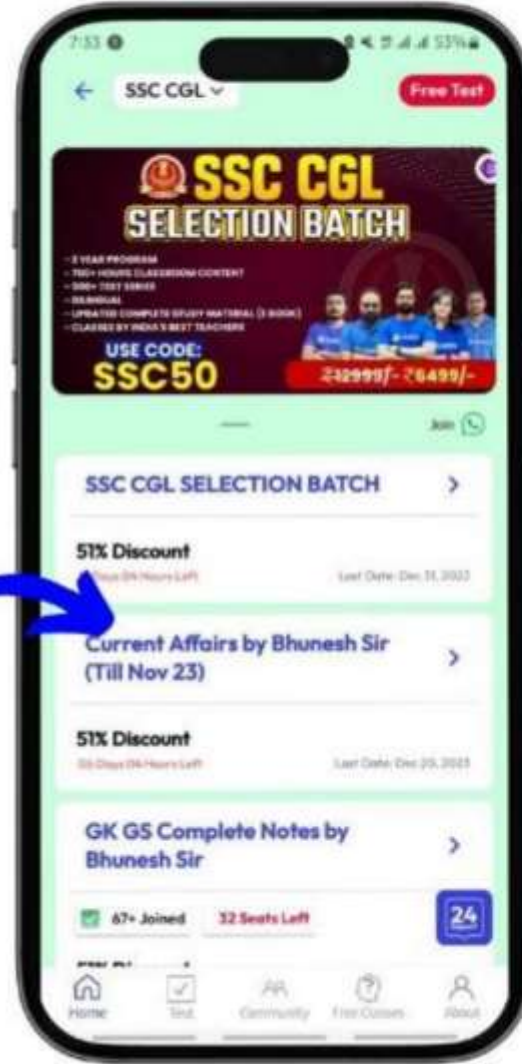
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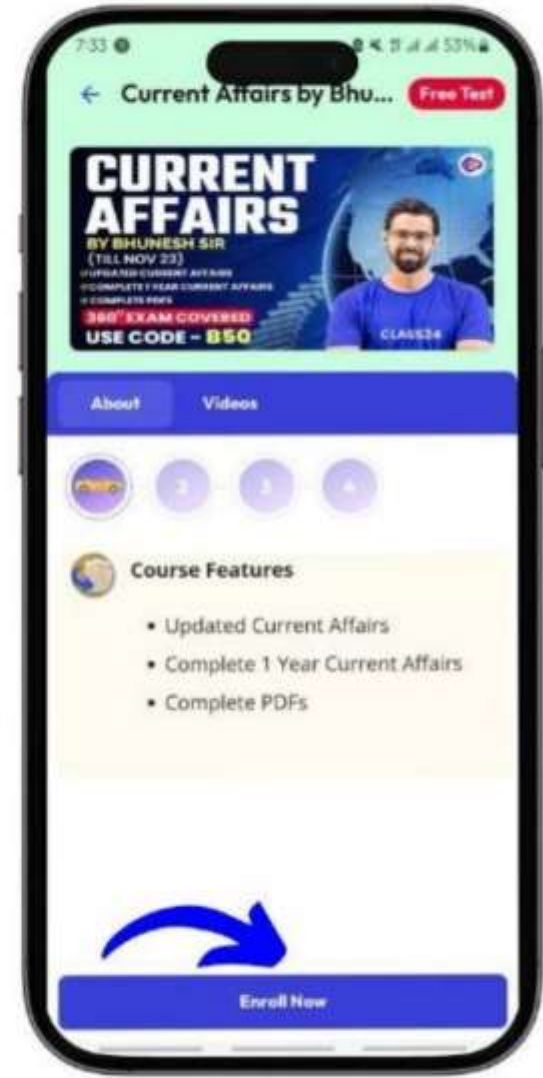
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Step-4





**SMALL DAILY
IMPROVEMENTS OVER
TIME LEAD TO
STUNNING RESULTS**



IN KERALA
'Celebrity' Jumbos now pricier than ever
Huge demand for elephants with good 'body features' has pushed up their rent and made festivals a costly affair
NEWS PAGE 3



Centre cancels FCRA registration of child welfare NGO
NEWS PAGE 3



William Lal takes over the reins while a list is at stake for Taiwan
PROFILES PAGE 9



Czech teenager Miroslav Štěpánek top seed Swiatek
SPORT PAGE 13

ED questions Soren for over 8 hours in tribal land scam case

We will face all conspiracies of Centre and win the fight, says Jharkhand CM; agency likely to approach him for a second round of questioning

Amrit Dhebari
PATNA

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren was quizzed by Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials at his official residence in Ranchi for over eight hours in connection with the alleged land scam case.



Under pressure, ED officials arrive at the residence of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren in Ranchi on Saturday.

The ED had earlier issued seven notices to the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha leader for questioning. However, he skipped all of them. Following the eighth summons, he agreed to respond his statement.

The case relates to the purchase and sale of forest land between 2020 and 2023 by allegedly forging documents.

Soren, ED officials reached Mr. Soren's residence at 1 p.m. and questioned him till 9.30 p.m. At that time, these came from Delhi.

When the ED officials were questioning him, JMM workers turned up outside the house and protested against the Central agency.

With heavy deployment of security forces, the entire area was cordoned into a virtual fortress.

ED officials did not interact with the media after questioning him. Sources said that over 100 questions were asked to Mr. Soren and he replied politely.

The agency is likely to approach Mr. Soren for a second round of questioning.

Chief ED officials left his residence, Mr. Soren came out with a smile and met the supporters who were sitting outside his residence since morning. He waved to his supporters, who shouted slogans in his support.

"Our Opposition is trying to dominate us with the help of ED and other investigating agencies, but we are not afraid of anything, because we have not done anything wrong. We will face all the conspiracies of the Central government and win this fight," Mr. Soren said.

The ED first questioned Mr. Soren for questioning in August 2023.

"Conspiracy is being hatched to do harm to government. Conspiracy is

Wetland 'nature tourism' gets a fillip

Govt. to support conservation action, enhance livelihood opportunities for local communities while tapping tourism potential of Ramsar sites

Neelambara Chakrabarti
NEW DELHI

The Union government has embarked on a mission to promote tourism at ecologically sensitive wetlands, better known as Ramsar sites, such as the Chilika lake in Odisha and Siltanpur bird sanctuary in Haryana.



Change in approach: Union Ramsar sites have been identified under the initiative. S.K. Mishra

The focus of the initiative would be to shift these fragile wetlands from high-value tourism to nature tourism by directly supporting conservation action and letting local communities and economies take the lead.

A Ramsar site is a wetland designated to be of international importance under an environmental treaty signed in February 1971 at Ramsar, Iran under the auspices of UNESCO.

As of now, 10 Ramsar sites have been identified under the initiative and five of them have been taken up as a pilot project for skill development of the facilitators, tourism service providers, and stakeholders in and around these sites.

These five wetlands are Siltanpur National Park (Haryana), Bhitarkanika Mangrove (Odisha), Chilika lake (Odisha), Sirpur (Madhya Pradesh) and Vishwam Sagar (Madhya Pradesh).

The initiative to develop these sites has been taken by the Union Tourism Ministry and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme, 2023.

The Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme, part of the 2023-24 Budget announcement, was launched in June 2023 to promote unique conservation values of Ramsar sites in the country while generating employment opportunities and supporting local livelihoods.

The scheme is being implemented in conjunction with various Union government Ministries and agencies, State wetland authorities, and a network of formal and informal institutions and individuals. The aim is to enhance livelihood opportunities for local communities through harnessing the nature-tourism potential of such sites.

The Tourism Ministry and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change are training facilitators, tourism service providers, stakeholders for strengthening of nature tourism at Ramsar sites in association with the State Tourism Department.

Training programme
As part of the mission, a total of 30 participants have been trained for 15 days under the Alternative Livelihood Programme (ALP) at Siltanpur (Haryana), Vishwam Sagar and Sirpur (Madhya Pradesh). At Bhitarkanika and Chilika in Odisha, two training programmes of 15 days each - the ALP and Parvati Navil Certificate (boatman certification for tourism) - will soon be completed. A total of 60 participants (30 for each course) are being trained at these sites.

"We are trying to train boatmen, local artisans as well as shopkeepers double up as guides who can explain the importance of these wetlands and the flora and fauna available there," the Tourism Ministry said.

A special conference is also being organised in the first week of February in India to formulate standard operating procedures and guidelines for the States and other stakeholders.

INSIDE



'Govt. to fence India-Myanmar border soon'

GUWAHATI

The Union government will soon fence the border between India and Myanmar, and will consider ending its free movement regime agreement with the country, Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday. **PHOTO: I**

Nitish shakes up JD(U) national team, drops Lalan

PATNA

Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the Janata Dal (United) has revamped its national team, with new office-bearers being announced for the first time since Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar took oath as the party's national president. **PHOTO: I**



Ethnic killings in Sudan left up to 15,000 dead: UN

UNITED NATIONS/CAIRO

Between 10,000 and 15,000 people were killed in one city in Sudan's West Darfur region last year in ethnic violence by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and allied Arab militia, according to a United Nations report. **PHOTO: I**

Spiritual tour



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple in Rameswaram on Saturday. I, BALAJISUBRAMANIAM

From Kausalya's land, the Ram Setu sari unfolds a rare weave

Odisha's Sambalpur weavers have been creating saris based on mythological themes for years, but have not had commercial success. They hope their fortunes will change now, beginning with a *baandhakala* ikat sari depicting Ram Setu that will be on display in Delhi on January 22

Neelambara Chakrabarti
NEW DELHI

Some time last year, when Apudhya was being decked out for the Ram Temple inauguration, almost 900 km away in Odisha's remote Katapali village in Bargarh district, Idhar Meher worked on a sari depicting Ram Setu (bridge).

A 2015 National Award-winning master craftsman, Mr. Idhar Meher worked with handspun cotton yarn for two months, using natural dyes extracted from flowers, jaggery, gram flour, iron rust, and indigo. The sari will now be displayed at the Jagannath Temple in Delhi

on January 22, since Hindu deities Ram is one of the 10 avatars of Jagannath. "The temple is receding lots of gifts from devotees across India at the moment and we do not want the importance of our exquisite sari to be lost in the mega event. It is our heirloom," said Idhar Meher, whose father, Kallab Meher, was one of Mr. Idhar Meher's five gurus.

Mr. Idhar Meher, who promotes the craft, has brought the sari for display to Delhi, and has sought permission to do so in the Ramanathaswamy temple in the Rameswaram island in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu.



Idhar Meher with the Ram Setu sari. SHANTANU MOHAPATRA

part of Odisha's Konark region, believed to be the first of Kausalya, Ram's mother. Sambalpur weavers regard Ram as their nephew and he is an integral part of our spiritual consciousness," said Mr. Idhar Meher.

was the Sant Kabir Mahotsav Award conferred on "outstanding handicraft weavers", said the IITM and labour invested in the crafted product determines the price of the sari.

Two-month effort
This one costs ₹1 lakh. The demand for these saris is low because of poor market linkages, leading to indifference often buying the craft with less margin for the craftspeople. Power loom products and even prints are far less expensive, says

Mr. Idhar Meher. Master craftspeople invest a great deal of time and money in developing new products, which ultimately does not pay off. "The cost of raw materials has doubled over the last 10 years."

The sari on the Ram Setu sari is woven entirely in black, and runs down the middle of the blue body, depicting the sea between Sri Lanka and India. It is patterned with tall bright trees of Gomti that are sacred to legend, formed the original sari. The public tells the story of the construction of the bridge with the sari (crocheted army) and squirrel, Ram, Hanuman, and other characters from the Ramayana.

Wetland 'nature tourism' gets a fillip

Govt. to support conservation action, enhance livelihood opportunities for local communities while tapping tourism potential of Ramsar sites

Sreeparna Chakrabarty

NEW DELHI

The Union government has embarked on a mission to promote tourism at ecologically sensitive wetlands, better known as Ramsar sites, such as the Chilika lake in Odisha and Sultanpur bird sanctuary in Haryana. The focus of the initiative would be to shift these fragile wetlands from high-value tourism to nature tourism by directly supporting conservation action and letting local communities and economies take the lead.

A Ramsar site is a wetland designated to be of international importance under an environmental treaty signed in February 1971 at Ramsar, Iran under the auspices of UNESCO. .

As of now, 16 Ramsar sites have been identified under the initiative and five of them have been taken up as a pilot project for skill development of the facilitators, tourism service providers, and stakeholders in and around these sites.

These five wetlands are Sultanpur National Park (Haryana), Bhitarkanika Mangroves (Odisha), Chilika lake (Odisha), Sirpur (Madhya Pradesh) and Yashwant Sagar (Madhya Pradesh).



Change in approach: Sixteen Ramsar sites have been identified under the initiative. K.R. DEEPAK

The Tourism Ministry and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change are training facilitators, tourism service providers, stakeholders for strengthening of nature tourism at Ramsar sites in association with the State Tourism Department.

The initiative to develop these sites has been taken by the Union Tourism Ministry and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under the Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme, 2023.

The Amrit Dharohar initiative, part of the 2023-24 Budget announcement, was launched in June 2023 to promote unique conservation values of Ramsar sites in the country while generating employment opportunities and supporting local livelihoods.

Livelihood opportunities

The scheme is being implemented in convergence with various Union government Ministries and agencies, State wetland authorities, and a network of formal and informal institutions and individuals. The aim is to enhance livelihood opportunities for local communities through harnessing the nature-tourism potential of such sites.

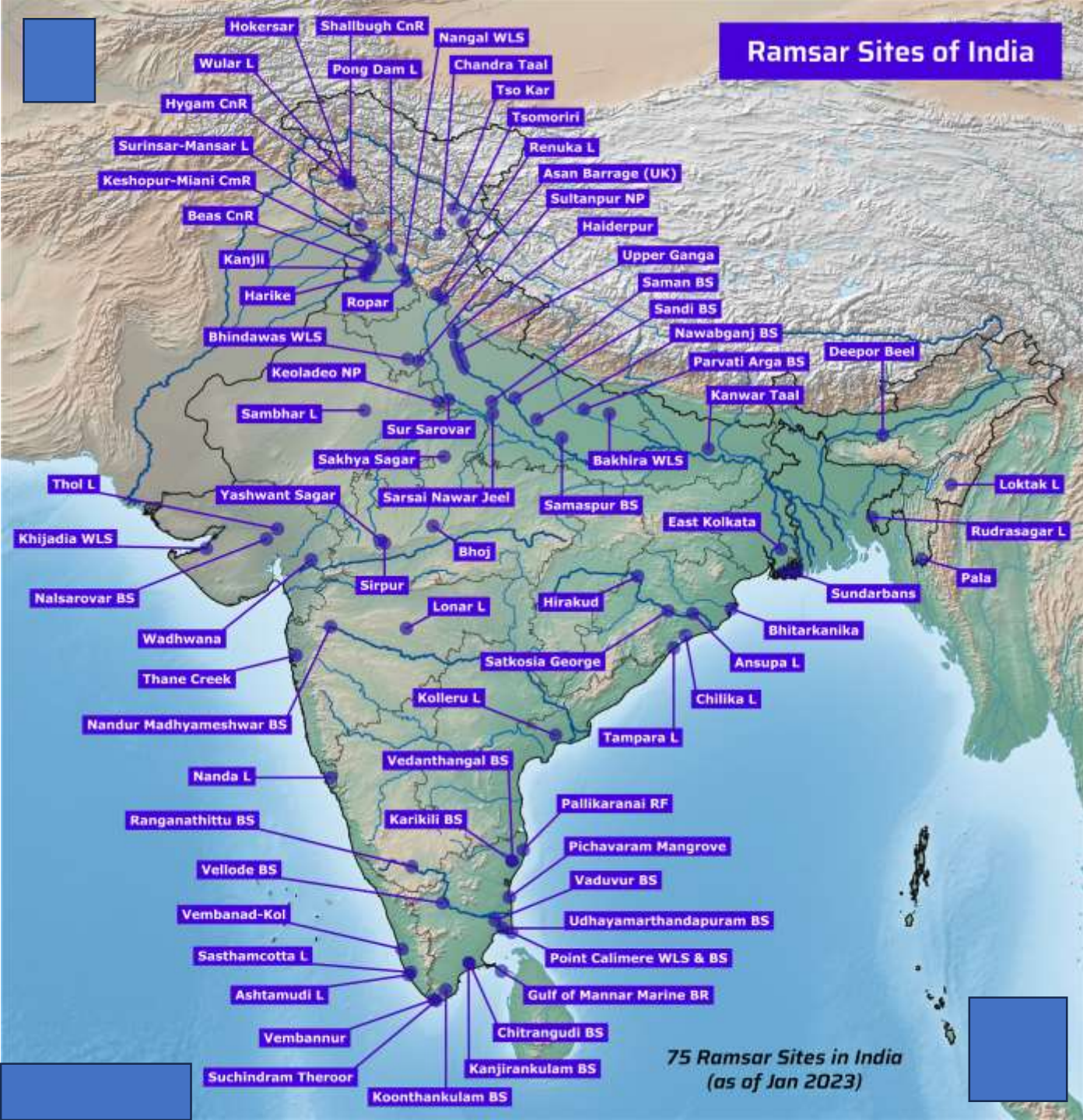
Training programme

As part of the mission, a total of 30 participants have been trained for 15 days under the Alternative Livelihood Programme (ALP) at Sultanpur (Haryana), Yashwant Sagar and Sirpur (Madhya Pradesh). At Bhitarkanika and Chilika in Odisha, two training programmes of 15 days each – the ALP and Paryatan Navik Certificate (boatman certification for tourism) – will soon be completed. A total of 60 participants (30 for each course) are being trained at these sites.

“We are trying to train boatmen, local artisans as well as shopkeepers double up as guides who can explain the importance of these wetlands and the flora and fauna available there,” the Tourism Ministry said.

A special conference is also being organised in the first week of February in Indore to formulate standard operating procedures and guidelines for the States and other stakeholders.

Ramsar Sites of India



75 Ramsar Sites in India
(as of Jan 2023)

- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an international treaty for “the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands”.
- It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran where it was signed on 2nd of February 1971.
- The 2nd of February each year is World Wetlands Day. The number of parties to the convention (COP) is 171 (as of Jan 2023).
- At the centre of the Ramsar philosophy is the “wise use” of wetlands. Wise use: maintenance of ecological character within the context of sustainable development.

- There are over 2,400 Ramsar Sites covering 2.5 million sq km on the territories of 171 Ramsar Contracting Parties across the world.
- The world's first Site was the Cobourg Peninsula in Australia, designated in 1974
- . The countries with the most Ramsar Sites are the United Kingdom with 175 and Mexico with 142.
- Bolivia has the largest area under Ramsar protection.

Largest Ramsar Sites in India

	Ramsar Site	State	Area (km ²)
1	Sundarban Wetland	West Bengal	4230
2	Vembanad-Kol Wetland	Kerala	1512.5
3	Chilika Lake	Odisha	1165
4	Satkosia Gorge	Odisha	981.97
5	Kolleru Lake	Andhra Pradesh	901

Smallest Ramsar Sites in India

1	Renuka Lake	Himachal Pradesh	0.2
2	Vembannur Wetland Complex	Tamil Nadu	0.2
3	Vedanthangal BS	Tamil Nadu	0.4
4	Nanda Lake	Goa	0.42

IN BRIEF

After quitting AAP, Haryana leader Ashok Tarwar joins BJP

Former Haryana Congress president Ashok Tarwar, who recently quit the Aam Aadmi Party, joined the BJP on Saturday as the ruling party looks to broaden its support base in the State with the induction of the Delhi leader. Mr. Tarwar joined the BJP in the presence of Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Narender Modh's leadership, saying the country has changed in the last 10 years.

Road projects pending during Gehlot govt. cleared: Dy. CM

The proposals for construction of 35 roads under the Prime Minister's Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), pending for two years during the previous Congress regime, have been cleared after the formation of the BJP government in Rajasthan. Deputy Chief Minister Diga Ramart, who holds the Public Works Department portfolio, said in Jaipur on Saturday that the approval from the Centre had been received for the roads of the total length of 300 km in three districts. The roads will be constructed at a cost of ₹251.38 crore.

UP police arrest 12 involved in cow slaughter after encounter

Twelve people were arrested on Saturday for their alleged involvement in illegal cow slaughter after a fierce encounter with police in Uttar Pradesh's Alwar district, officials said. Three of the accused suffered bullet injuries and were taken to hospital. SSP Ashish Singh said, "Three accused suffered bullet injuries in the leg." Their condition is said to be stable.

Uttarakhand Congress leaders pitch for Priyanka to contest from Haridwar constituency

Suhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

With the Congress's efforts to offset the perception of narrowing influence primarily focused on south India than the party's Uttarakhand leadership. As these pitching for general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to contest from Haridwar Lok Sabha constituency in the 2024 general election. At a State District Congress Committee president meeting held in the weekend, there was a near-unanimous demand that Ms. Vadra should contest from Haridwar. The demand has been relayed to the central leadership. "This was a suggestion made by many leaders. If Priyankaji agrees, then Haridwar is a seat we can easily



Uttarakhand Pradesh Congress Committee president Priyanka Gandhi Vadra (left) with other party leaders during a meeting in Haridwar. (PTI PHOTO)

Jarange-Patil sets off on foot to Mumbai; 'will fight for quota till last breath'

Accompanied by thousands from Maratha community, the activist is set to reach Azad Maidan on January 26, where he will go on a fast till the State government meets his reservation demand

Poojima Sab
MUMBAI

Maratha quota activist Jarange-Patil set off on a foot march from Azad Maidan village in Anaravali-Sarathi village in Maharashtra's Jalga district to the State capital, Mumbai, to press for the community's demand for reservation in government jobs and education. Accompanied by thousands of marathas from the Maratha community, Mr. Jarange-Patil is set to reach Azad Maidan, designated place for protests and rallies in south Mumbai, on January 26. He is expected to begin an indefinite hunger strike at the protest venue in support of reservation till the government meets his demand.

Addressing presspersons in Jalga, the activist demanded that the government immediately issue a blanket order. Backward Class (OBC) Kumbh certificates to Marathas. "The government has not acted for over seven months on our demand for Maratha reservation, which has been ignored for over 48 years. Despite submitting legal records of people, the State government is not releasing Kumbh certificates. Even if they shoot govern-



Marathi people who are protesting against the reservation demand in Anaravali-Sarathi village, Jalga, on Saturday. (SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT)

ment me, I will prefer death over the withdrawal of my agitation. I will not back off from marching to Mumbai," he said. As the Marathas, a community associated with agriculture, are grouped under the OBC category in the State and enjoy reservation benefits in education and government jobs, Mr. Jarange-Patil's demand had sparked off protests by OBC groups that were apprehensive about ceding their reservation space to the Marathas. With the OBCs being a core base of the BJP in Maharashtra for years, Deputy Chief Minister and party leader Devendra Fadnis had to assure OBC members who took out protests across the

State that the government would not disturb their quotas and if justice would be meted out to them. "Won't back off" Urging people to join the agitation in Mumbai, Mr. Jarange-Patil said, "Whether I survive or not, we Marathas will continue to fight. The fight must go on until our intention to get reservation is achieved. I will continue to fight till my last breath for the future of our community, so that the next generations need not suffer what we have. I am ready to face any hurdle, and no matter whoever puts several guns to stop me, I will not back off, come what may." A tear-eyed Mr. Jarange-Patil told villagers,

who had gathered around him on Saturday, that his "fight is for all people of the village and the entire Maratha community." "I am leaving this village with determination and a promise to the people that I will only return with the reservation for them." The quota activist said that he is not bothered whether the government wants to "sit down to discuss with us or completely ignore us." "We carried on our march, if they decide to shut their doors for discussion. Honestly, it will not affect me. I just know that I am marching to Mumbai and will fast there along with thousands of my Maratha kithery, who are leaving their families and daily earnings to join the protest," he said. Taking a dig at the ruling government led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Mr. Fadnis, he said, "I am not angry with the government of the Maratha community. The community is forced to walk the path of agitation and fast because this government is not caring about it and are not serious about offering OBC reserved fortune to our community," Mr. Raut said.

'Akhand Bharat' will happen one day, says MP. CM



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and State BJP president V.D. Sharma during the 'Jan Anabhar Yatra' in Sagor on Saturday. (PTI)

Manish Malpani
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said "Akhand Bharat" will be a reality some day and the "separation of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya is the first step towards Ram Raj" (ideal state).

Speaking at a religious event in Bhatnagar near Bhopal on Saturday, Mr. Yadav said that in 1947, India lost Sindh, Punjab was divided, and Pakistan was formed after the Partition. "If God wishes, 'Akhand Bharat' will be formed again. If not today, then tomorrow, but only up to Sindh or Punjab, but even till Afghanistan...." he said.

"Good fortune" Mr. Yadav said Lord Ram's temple was built by King Vikramaditya in the ancient times, but it was a "jerry" in the architect's eyes." He said construction of the new temple was a one-half-day for the government office on January 22.

struggle of 30-32 years. Earlier this month also, Mr. Sharma was in the spotlight when he had urged the public to give the BJP another chance at the Centre to ensure that the flag is hoisted in Mandir in Ayodhya is the first step towards Ram Raj (ideal state). The one who is building a temple in Ayodhya. The one who is building the corridor of Ram, Ganga, and who has removed Article 370. Give us another chance, we will show you by changing the geography also," he said.

"Shant neta shops" Meanwhile, the State government on Saturday issued an order to keep all meat shops and slaughterhouses shut on January 22. In a communication to all the civic bodies, Urban Development Minister Kalash Vijaywargan asked them to ensure enforcement of the order. "The State government is already declared a holiday for all schools and colleges and half-day for the government offices on January 22,

Boat tragedy: civic body terminates contract of firm operating lake zone

Poojima Sab
MUMBAI

The contract of the firm managing a lake recreation zone in Gujarat's Vadodra was terminated by the local civic body following the boat tragedy in which 22 students and two teachers were killed, an official said on Saturday. The boat, carrying students and teachers on a picnic, capsized on Thursday afternoon in Khatol lake in Haroi area, with subsequent probes showing the vessel was overloaded and the service operator had not provided enough life jackets. The contract of Khatol Projects, the firm which developed, operated and maintained the lakefront for recreational purposes, has been terminated by the Vadodra Municipal Corporation, the civic body's standing committee 'chair' said. Gujarat police on Friday said they had arrested Bhanubhai Vadav, Vesprikash Vadav and Rashmi Singh, the boat operator, Khatol Projects, as well as the firm's manager Shantilal Solanki. Two boat operators, Navin Chhal and Anil Vadav, were also arrested. "The lakefront was developed under the PPP model and the firm had to pay ₹5.01 lakh annually to the VMC. The premises have been handed over to Mr. Minty said. "The contract was given in 2017 and development works were completed in 2019, she added. "The firm was responsible for providing life jackets and maintained the lakefront for recreational purposes, has been terminated by the Vadodra Municipal Corporation, the civic body's standing committee 'chair' said.

Delhi police arrest techie from Andhra Pradesh for Rashmika Mandanna deepfake video

The Hindu Bureau

The Delhi police on Saturday arrested a 24-year-old B.Tech. graduate from Andhra Pradesh in Gurgaon district for creating the viral deepfake video of actor Rashmika Mandanna. The accused, Ramanand Kumar, was arrested from his home as a video editor and social media manager. The police said he had created the video to increase the number of followers on his Instagram channel he had made for the Bollywood actor. The arrest comes nearly two months after the police arrested a 27-year-old actor. Delhi Police's Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFS) unit analysed more than 500 social media accounts during the

Delhi High Court will decide who invented butter chicken and dal makhni

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Who invented butter chicken and dal makhni? The Delhi High Court is set to get the answer this week as it has accepted the plea filed by the owners of Delhi's Moti Mahal restaurant accusing Daryaganj restaurant of misappropriating the recipes of the two people by claiming to be the inventor. The applicant, Rupa Chahal, said the two recipes belonged to her family. Her family, she said, has often appeared in the media on the origins of the dishes, were founded and colonial history. According to the applicant, the late Kundan Lal Jaggi, her father-in-law, began to make this dish in 1920 in Peshawar, now in Pakistan. Mr. Chahal moved to Delhi and opened the restaurant called Daryaganj in the locality of the same name. Tandoori specialities "In and around 1948, Mr. Chahal also opened a hotel by the name Moti Mahal in Connaught Place. Then, this restaurant's tandoori specialities - which Mr. Chahal had learnt in Pakistan - had become a must on Prime Minister Nehru's banquets, dinners, and meals for political events." The 2,700-page court claim. It was in 1978 that Mr. Chahal started his business at several other parts of the city. The applicant claimed that either her father-in-law who had mastered the makhni sauce, which prevented the dehydration of food. The court also ordered a hotel Mahal have taken Daryaganj restaurant to court. (FILE PHOTO)

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Delhi High Court will decide who invented butter chicken and *dal makhni*

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Who invented butter chicken and *dal makhni*? The Delhi High Court is set to get the answer this question as it has accepted the plea filed by the owners of Delhi's Moti Mahal restaurant accusing Daryaganj restaurant of misleading people by claiming to be the inventors. The applicant, Rupa Gujral, said the two recipes belonged to her family. Both brands that have often sparred in the media on the origins of the dishes, were founded in Darya Ganj, a neighbourhood rich in Mughal

and colonial history.

According to the applicant, the late Kundan Lal Gujral, her father-in-law, began to make this dish in 1920 in Peshawar, now in Pakistan. Mr. Gujral moved to Delhi and opened the first restaurant called Daryaganj, in the locality of the same name.

Tandoori specialities

"In and around 1948, Mr. Gujral also opened a hotel by the name Moti Mahal Hotel in Darya Ganj. By then, this restaurant's tandoori specialities – which Mr. Gujral had learnt in Pakistan – had become a must on Prime Minister

Nehru's banquets, dinners, and meals for political meets," the 2,700-page suit filed in the Delhi High Court claimed.

It was in 1975 that Mr. Gujral decided to expand his business to several other parts of Delhi. The applicant claimed that it was her father-in-law who had invented the *makhani* sauce, which prevented the dehydration of food.

"...back in early days the unsold leftovers of chicken could not be stored in refrigeration, Mr. Gujral began worrying about his cooked chicken drying out, and thus he invented a sauce with which



The owners of Delhi's Moti Mahal have taken Daryaganj restaurant to court. FILE PHOTO

he could rehydrate them. His invention was 'the *makhani* butter sauce' in which the chicken was

simmered in a luscious gravy with tomatoes, butter, cream, and some spices to help them retain moisture. This is how Butter Chicken was created which later traversed the globe," the suit said, adding that he then applied the same recipe to black lentils, which gave birth to *dal makhani*.

Refuting claims

Refuting the claims of the Gujral family, the owners of Daryaganj say it was the late Kundan Lal Jaggi who came up with the idea of the two recipes. Appearing for the respondents, Senior Advocate Amit Si-

bal maintained that allegations against his client are "baseless and lacking a cause of action".

He also claimed that the first Moti Mahal restaurant was jointly established in Peshawar by Kundan Lal Gujral and Kundan Lal Jaggi. "...hence the defendants are equally entitled to use this photograph (one of Nehru with Kundan Lal Gujral)," the counsel of Daryaganj submitted in court. Several photographs have been presented in court, which the Gujral family claims the Jaggi family cannot use.

The matter was heard by the Single Bench of Jus-

tice Sanjeev Narula on January 16. The court issued summons to Daryaganj restaurant owners and asked them to file their written response in a month. The court also issued notice on Moti Mahal's application for interim injunction; the case will be heard next on May 29.

Battles around food

This is not the first time legal battles have been fought around food. In 2018, Justice Jayant Nath, in his order ruled that the Tunday Kababi name belongs exclusively to Mohammad Usman, the

grandson of Haji Murad Ali 'Tunday' in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The court heard the case between M.U. Eating Point, owned by Mr. Usman and a competing food chain, Lucknow Wale Tunday Kababi, owned by Mohammad Muslim, who claimed to be the maternal grandson of the Mr. Ali.

In 2018, in a trademark suit, Kake-Da-Hotel in Delhi's Connaught Place had moved the court against Nashik-based Kaka-Ka Hotel, demanding the latter refrain from using the Kaka-ka or Kake-da. The court directed the Nashik outlet not to use either.

JERUSALEM

Netanyahu tells Biden he opposes Palestinian sovereignty in Gaza



Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told U.S. President Joe Biden that he opposed Palestinian sovereignty in Gaza, in a call the day before. They spoke by phone for the first time in a month, with Mr. Biden saying after the call that he believed it was possible Mr. Netanyahu could agree to a form of Palestinian state. AP

Iran launches satellite as regional tensions spike

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iran's Revolutionary Guards launched a research satellite putting it into a higher orbit in a new milestone for its aerospace programme. The U.S. has repeatedly warned Iran against such launches, saying the same technology can be used for ballistic missiles, including ones designed to deliver a nuclear warhead. "The Soraya satellite was successfully launched with the Ghahm-100 satellite carrier of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps," the official news agency said. "This is the first time that Iran has successfully placed a satellite in orbit higher than 500 km," IRNA said. The satellite, which weighs about 50 kg, was put in orbit 740 km above Earth.

Ethnic killings in a Sudan city left up to 15,000 dead, says UN

Reuters
UNITED NATIONS/CAIRO

Between 10,000 and 15,000 people were killed in one city in Sudan's West Darfur region last year in ethnic violence by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and allied Arab militia, according to a United Nations report seen by Reuters on Friday. In the report to the UN Security Council, independent UN monitors attributed the toll in El Geneina to intelligence sources and contradicted it with the UN estimate that about 15,000 people have been killed across Sudan since war erupted on April 15, 2023, between the Sudanese Army and the RSF.

"Credible" accusations The monitors also described as "credible" accusations that the UAE had provided military support to the RSF "several times per week" via Amirat in northern Chad, top Sudanese general accused the UAE in November of backing the RSF war effort. In a letter to the monitor,



A UN report accuses the RSF of targeting the ethnic African Mursi tribe in attacks that "may amount to war crimes." REUTERS

Israeli strike on Damascus kills Iran's spy chief for Syria

Along with 10 others, five members of the Iran's Revolutionary Guards were killed. Israel has stepped up its attacks on Syria ever since war broke out against Hamas in Gaza Strip on October 7

Agence France-Presse
DAMASCUS

An Israeli strike on Damascus killed the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' spy chief for Syria and four other Guards members on Saturday, Iran said, in an attack that tore into a multi-storey residential building.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said 10 militants were killed in the Israeli strike on the Maseleh neighbourhood of the capital Damascus.

In recent weeks, Israel has been accused of intensifying strikes on senior Iranian and allied figures in Syria and Lebanon - backing of the Palestinian militant group Hamas - raising fears the Gaza conflict could expand.

YANSHANPU

Fire at school dormitory in central China kills thirteen students



Thirteen schoolchildren died in a dormitory fire in central China's Henan province. The blaze at the Yingqiu school in Henan's Yanshanpu village was reported to the local fire department at 11 p.m. on Friday night. A teacher at the school said all the victims were from the same third-grade class of nine- and 10-year-olds. AP

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Internet disrupted again during opposition web broadcast



Pakistan's social media and internet services were severely disrupted on Saturday night, as the party of jailed ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan held a "virtual rally" ahead of elections in under three weeks. The outage is the second in two weeks coinciding with online campaign events organized by Khan's PTI party. PTI

WASHINGTON

European crew, including first Turkiye astronaut, arrives at ISS



An all-European crew including Turkiye's first astronaut arrived at the International Space Station on Saturday on a voyage chartered by Axiom Space. It is the company's third launch to the space laboratory and the first where all three of the paid seats were bought by national agencies, rather than wealthy individuals. AP

EU's Josep Borrell says Israel 'created, financed' Hamas

Agence France-Presse
MADRID

The EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell late on Friday accused Israel of having "created" and "financed" the Palestinian militant group Hamas, which launched unprecedented attacks on Israel on October 7.

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has in recent days reaffirmed his opposition to the creation of a Palestinian state, drawing criticism from his U.S. ally, which is still advocating a "two-state solution".

"We believe that a two-state solution must be imposed from outside to bring peace. Although, I insist, Israel is reaffirming its refusal (of this solution), and to prevent it they have gone so far as to create Hamas themselves," Mr. Borrell said.

"Hamas has been in



Josep Borrell

named by the Israeli government to try to weaken the Palestinian Authority of Fatah.

"But if we do not intervene strongly, the spiral of hate and violence will continue from generation to generation, from funeral to funeral, as the seeds of hatred that are being sown in Gaza today flourish," he added during a speech in Spanish at the University of Valladolid in central Spain, which awarded him an honorary doctorate. Hamas was created in

December 1987 shortly after the start of the first Palestinian intifada in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories by a group of Islamist militants claiming to be from the Muslim Brotherhood.

Hamas, the Arabic acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement, was notably founded to counter the Islamic Jihad militant group and compete with the mainly secular Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) then led by Yasser Arafat.

"Twenty years later, in June 2007, Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip. In recent years, the Gaza Strip, controlled by Hamas and under Israeli blockade, has received millions of dollars in aid from Qatar, providing criticism of Netanyahu, who is accused of having financed the movement. The Prime Minister denies the accusation.

'Lifesavers' of U.S.



Anti-abortion activists attend the annual March for Life rally outside of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington DC, on Friday. The march marked the anniversary of the Supreme Court's now-overturned 1973 Roe v Wade ruling which legalised abortion in the U.S. REUTERS

Military base operated by U.S.-led coalition in Iraq struck by missiles

Agence France-Presse
BAGHDAD

At least a dozen missiles were fired on Saturday at a military base used by U.S.-led coalition forces in western Iraq, a U.S. defence source and Iraqi police said.

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Since October, there have been dozens of attacks on U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria

airbase", adding that a joint damage assessment was under way with coalition and Iraqi forces.

One injured The American official said that initial reports indicated one member of the Iraqi security forces had been seriously injured.

Since the mid-October, there have been dozens of attacks on U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria, deployed there to fight jihadists of the Islamic State group.

Nepal requests Russia not to request its nationals into Army

Press Trust of India
KATHMANDU

Nepal has requested Russia not to admit Nepalese nationals into the Russian Army and help repatriate those who have already joined the country's forces to fight the war in Ukraine. At least 200 Nepalese youth have joined the Russian Army through illegal channels and 12 of them have already lost their lives while fighting against Ukraine.

Nepalese Foreign Minister N. P. Sautel, during his meeting with Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Vadim Sergeev, Vasilovich on Friday on the sidelines

of the ongoing Non-Aligned Summit in Kampala, Uganda, asked Russia "not to recruit Nepalese nationals into the country's Army and to help repatriate those who have already joined the country's forces to fight the war in Ukraine. At least 200 Nepalese youth have joined the Russian Army through illegal channels and 12 of them have already lost their lives while fighting against Ukraine."

Mr. Sautel clarified that "Nepal has no policy to send its nationals to Foreign Army except those free countries with which it has tradition of arrangements. Therefore, I have asked the Russian Minister not to recruit its nationals into its Army," Mr. Sautel was quoted as saying by his personal

secretariat. Mr. Sautel also asked the Russian to "send back the dead bodies of those killed in the Russia-Ukraine

war while fighting for the Russian Army and to provide due compensation to the family of the victims."

The Nepalese Foreign



N.P. Sautel and Vadim Sergeev Vasilovich at a meeting on the sidelines of the 16th Summit of NAM in Kampala in Uganda. PTI

Minister has requested the Russian government to make necessary arrangements to return the dead bodies of the earliest so that the family members of the victims could perform the last rites of the deceased relatives as per their traditional rituals,"

Mr. Sautel said that necessary arrangements will be made to provide compensation to the family of the deceased as per the Russian law. Mr. Vasilovich, who is also the leader to the NAM in Russia, has assured Mr. Sautel that in-

stances will be taken to address the concerns raised by Nepal.

Bilateral ties "During the meeting, the two leaders also discussed various aspects of bilateral relations between Nepal and Russia," according to Mr. Sautel's secretary. Mr. Sautel on the occasion mentioned the long historical relations existing between Nepal and Russia. The Russian Deputy Foreign Minister underscored the need for taking forward the bilateral relations, stressing that the relations between two countries were built on a strong foundation.

Iran launches satellite as regional tensions spike

Agence France-Presse

TEHRAN

Iran's Revolutionary Guards launched a research satellite putting it into a higher orbit in a new milestone for its aerospace programme. The U.S. has repeatedly warned Iran against such launches, saying the same technology can be used for ballistic missiles, including ones designed to deliver a nuclear warhead.

"The Soraya satellite was successfully launched with the Ghaem-100 satellite carrier of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps," the official news agency said. "This is the first time that Iran has successfully placed a satellite in orbits higher than 500 km," IRNA said. The satellite which weighs about 50 kg was put in orbit 750 km above Earth.

'Israeli strike on Damascus kills Iran's spy chief for Syria'

Along with 10 others, five members of the Iran's Revolutionary Guards were killed; Israel has stepped up its attacks on Syria ever since war broke out against Hamas in Gaza Strip on October 7

Agence France-Presse
DAMASCUS

An Israeli strike on Damascus killed the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' spy chief for Syria and four other Guards members on Saturday, Iran said, in an attack that tore into a multi-storey residential building.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said 10 persons were killed in the Israeli strike on the Mazzeh neighbourhood of the capital Damascus.

In recent weeks, Israel has been accused of intensifying strikes on senior Iranian and allied figures in Syria and Lebanon – backers of the Palestinian militant group Hamas – raising fears the Gaza conflict



High stakes: Security personnel search the rubble of a building destroyed in a reported Israeli strike in Damascus on Saturday. AFP

could expand.

"The Revolutionary Guards' Syria intel chief, his deputy and two other Guards members were among those martyred in the attack on Syria by Israel," Iran's Mehr news agency said.

The Guards' Sepah news agency identified four of them as Hojatollah Omidvar, Ali Aghazadeh, Hossein Mohammadi and Saeed Karimi.

The war-torn country's official news agency, SANA, said a residential

building in Damascus' Mazzeh neighbourhood had been targeted in what it called "an Israeli aggression".

Decade of civil war

During more than a decade of civil war in Syria, Israel has launched hundreds of air strikes on its territory, targeting Iran-backed forces as well as Syrian Army positions. But it has intensified attacks since the war between Israel and Hamas, which like Lebanon's Hezbollah is an ally of Iran, began on October 7.

Saturday's presumed Israeli strike was their second high-profile targeted assassination in Syria in less than a month.

In December, an Israeli air strike killed a senior Iranian general in Syria.





Modi Sarkar ki Guarantee

'Vocal for Local' creating employment opportunities
4 times increase in Khadi sales in last 10 years; Employment opportunities created in villages through promotion of Khadi and rural enterprises' products



ANNOUNCEMENT IN ASSAM

India-Myanmar border to be fenced, says Shah

Signals end to Free Movement Regime

SUKRITA BARIJAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 20

INDIA'S External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj on Saturday announced that the Centre has decided to fence the entire length of the currently porous India-Myanmar border to stop free movement of people.

Addressing the ongoing but unproductive Free Movement Regime (FMR) with Myanmar is an open border. The Narendra Modi government has taken a decision that the India-Myanmar border will be fenced and the FMR will be terminated. The government is reconsidering the FMR agreement with Myanmar, and is going to end this case of coming and going.

While there have been reports that the Centre is planning to fence the border, this decision signals the end of the FMR.

'Land scam': ED questions Soren at his residence



Hemant Soren was questioned by ED officers at his residence in Ranchi on Saturday.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi takes a dip in the sea during his visit to Ramanaothaswamy Temple in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, on Saturday.

'Darshan' of old idol put on hold, stage set for opening tomorrow

MAULSHREE BEETH
AYODHYA, JANUARY 20

LESS THAN 48 hours before the consecration scheduled for January 22, an earthquake and protracted set of rituals around the 51-inch idol of Ram Lalla were completed Saturday.

The new idol's eyes, still closed, and its feet, still in a state of being set up, were brought from locations across Ayodhya.

Citing Govt order, AIIMS shuts down OPD on Jan 22 until 2.30 pm

ANKITA UPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 20

AIIMS'S ALL India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) will remain shut for half day on January 22 in view of the Ram Temple inauguration in Ayodhya, it said Saturday. The out-patient department (OPD) will remain closed until 2.30 pm. Though emergency and critical services units will function normally.

Similar arrangements have been put in place at the all-India Central Government hospitals in the Capital, including the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.

This comes after the Centre Thursday ordered half day for all offices, institutions and industrial establishments under its control for January 22 to enable employees to participate in celebrations in view of the Ayodhya event.

Citing the Centre's order, a communication issued by the AIIMS administration Saturday said, "The government of India has decided to observe January 22 as a day of national mourning in view of the Ayodhya event."

DECEMBER 21 KILLING OF FOUR SOLDIERS

'Torture of 5 more slipped under radar in Poonch, cops seek medical records

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, JANUARY 20

A DAY after the December 21 attack in Poonch in an Army company in which four soldiers were killed, eight civilians were picked up and allegedly tortured by security forces — three of them died. Five were admitted for treatment at Government Medical Hospital, Baramulla. There were five more civilians who have alleged torture and detention. The Indian Army has confirmed.

All six residents of Topa Pir village in Poonch and were admitted to another hospital on the night of December 22 and discharged on January 12.

'Land scam': ED questions Soren at his residence

AMBISEK ANJAD
RANCHI, JANUARY 20

AFTER SKIPPING the Enforcement Directorate's summons seven times, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren was questioned for seven-and-a-half hours at his residence here on Saturday, amid a show of strength by his ministers and supporters.

The money laundering case against Soren pertains to an alleged land scam. It is linked to the ownership of a land parcel measuring 740 acres in Rajra area of Ranchi, allegedly acquired through "incidents of crime" involving illegal sale of Army land. IAS officer Chhota Ranjan, also an accused in the case, is currently in judicial custody.

The ED officials arrived at Soren's residence at 12.30 pm and left a little before 6.30 pm. Soren after the ED team left.

FREEDOM FROM MULTIPLE CARDS. ONE NATION, ONE CARD.

Presenting SBI RuPay NCMC Debit Card in Delhi

- All SBI RuPay NCMC Debit cards having logo are accepted at Delhi Metro Stations and all other NCMC enabled metro rail, bus, and transit projects across India.
- A one-time activity of offline wallet activation on the card is to be done at Delhi Metro Stations or any of the NCMC enabled Metro station Booking counters or Bus terminals.
- Top-up can be done through SBI's Internet Banking, YONO and YONO Lite App.
- Scan the QR code for the same.
- CRUDY limit for consecutive offline wallet transactions.
- Maximum limit of ₹500/- per transaction for travel purpose in Metro and Buses.
- Open an SBI Account at your nearest SBI Branch to get SBI RuPay NCMC Debit Card.
- RuPay Prepaid Card Users can top-up the prepaid card by visiting customer portal at <http://ruapp.sbi>

For assistance, call 1800 1234 or visit bank.sbi

New thaw: 'Taliban envoy is R-day guest in Abu Dhabi'

SHUBHANGI ROY
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 20

THE INDIAN Embassy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has received Taliban envoy, Badruddin Haqqani, for the Republic Day celebrations in Abu Dhabi.

Badruddin Haqqani, one of the sons of Jalaluddin Haqqani, was appointed Ambassador in October 2023. His father, Sirajuddin Haqqani, is the Interior Minister of Afghanistan.

Among the prominent leaders of the Taliban, the Haqqani network was involved in several terror attacks, including on the Indian Embassy in Kabul in 2008.

A copy of the invitation issued in the name of Indian Ambassador to UAE, Sanjay Kumar, was received by Afghan journalist Hat Sarwary, who is now based outside of Afghanistan. The Indian Embassy verified the invite.

News Delhi's view is that the Indian government has been engaging with the Taliban ever since it came to power in 2021 and engaged the Taliban Embassy in Kabul. So, the invitation to Badruddin Haqqani is in line with that approach.

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LAL BHADUR SHASTRI NATIONAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE: 2024

NOMINATION INVITED

Nominations are invited for the 25th Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award for Excellence: 2024 which honours each year a distinguished Indian, residing either in India or abroad, for his/her sustained individual contributions and outstanding achievements of high professional order and excellence in the field of management, public administration, public affairs, education, institution building, art & culture and sports. The Awardee will be selected by a jury comprising of eminent persons.

The award is given every year on October 1, the eve of the birth anniversary of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. The honour carries an award of Rs. Five Lakh plus a citation and a plaque and the awardee is designated as Lal Bahadur Shastri fellow.

EARLIER RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARD	
Prof. Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	2003
Dr. Rajat Ghoshal	2002
Dr. Binod Chandra	2001
Prof. S. S. Bhatnagar	2000
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1999
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1998
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1997
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1996
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1995
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1994
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1993
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1992
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1991
Dr. J. S. Kumar Bhat	1990

NOMINATIONS MAY BE SENT IN CONFIDENCE LATEST BY MARCH 31, 2024

Nomination form may be obtained from the Director,
LAL BHADUR SHASTRI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, DELHI
Plot No. 11/7, Sector-31, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075
Tel: 011-2507700, Email: director@lbiim.ac.in

Chairman - LBSIM, Delhi

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ANNOUNCEMENT IN ASSAM

India-Myanmar border to be fenced, says Shah

Signals end to Free Movement Regime

SUKRITA BARUAH

GUWAHATI, JANUARY 20

MAKING IT official, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday announced that the Centre has decided to fence the entire length of the currently porous India-Myanmar border to stop free movement of people.

Addressing the passing out parade of newly appointed commandos of the Assam Police in Guwahati, Shah said: "Our bor-

der with Myanmar is an open border. The Narendra Modi government has taken a decision that the India-Myanmar border will be secure and the whole border will be fenced like the Bangladesh border. The government is reconsidering our Free Movement Regime (FMR) agreement with Myanmar, and is going to end this ease of coming and going."

While there have been reports that the Centre is planning

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

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What is FMR?

THE FREE Movement Regime allows tribes living along the India-Myanmar border on either side to travel up to 16 km inside the other country without a visa and stay up to two weeks. It was implemented in 2018 as part of the Narendra Modi government's Act East policy.



Name of the country	Length of the border (in Km)
Bangladesh	4,096.7
China	3,488
Pakistan	3,323
Nepal	1,751
Myanmar	1,643
Bhutan	699
Afghanistan	106
Total	15,106.7

WHICH STATES/UNION TERRITORIES SHARE BOUNDARIES WITH PAKISTAN?



Science City to be set up in Gurgaon-Faridabad: Khattar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

FARIDABAD, JANUARY 20

ANNOUNCING A Science City on 50 acres in Faridabad-Gurgaon districts, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar stated that there is a committed effort to enhance education in science

and technology in the state. The search for a suitable site is currently underway.

The Chief Minister was speaking at the closing ceremony of the 9th India International Science Festival held at THSTI Biotech Institute, Faridabad Saturday.

Speaking about Prime

Minister Narendra Modi, Khattar remarked on his dedication to science and said the mantra of 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan, and Jai Anusandhan' sets a new direction for India to progress.

To promote science education, the establishment of science clubs is underway in 10 government senior secondary

schools in each district in Haryana. These clubs will play a crucial role in fostering scientific thinking and awareness among young students, the CM said.

He further stated that to promote science education among students, the Department of Science and Technology also gives scholarships to students.

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"NO POLITICAL BOUNDARIES"
Going to a temple is a matter of faith: Pilot
NEWS > PAGE 4

"NISAR set for launch this year"
NEWS > PAGE 5

MUSEVENI'S ADMISSION
"Expulsion of Indians from Uganda a mistake"
NEWS > PAGE 5

POST OFFICE ACT
The unbridled powers of interception
It lacks safeguards to dispel fears of misuse
EDITORIAL > PAGE 5

PACED WITH
Djokovic breezes into quarterfinals
SPORT > PAGE 10

INSIDE

T.N. will not vote for Modi this time too, says Stalin
BALACHANDRAN
DMK president and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday said the party on Tamil Nadu had not voted for Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last two elections, and would not vote for him in the upcoming Lok Sabha election as well. > PAGE 8

'India's invitation to Taliban envoy in UAE is routine'
NEW DELHI
The invitation from the Indian Embassy in the UAE to the Afghan Ambassador and Taliban envoy Bakhtul Haqqani for the Republic Day reception is "routine", official sources said, reacting to criticism that the Modi government is 'normalising' the Taliban regime. > PAGE 8

Gaza death toll crosses 25,000 as strikes continue
GAZA STRIP
The toll of Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip since war broke out between Israel and Hamas in October has passed 25,000, Gaza health officials said, while Israeli attacks and street battles raged across the Hamas-run enclave on Sunday. > PAGE 13

25 killed in attack in Russia-held Donetsk region
MOSCOW
A strike on a crowded market in the Russian-occupied city of Donetsk in eastern Ukraine on Sunday killed at least 25 people and 20 wounded on Sunday, Russian-backed officials said. Both Moscow and Kyiv have accused each other of a false escalation in attacks on civilian areas. > PAGE 13

Consecration today; PM, priests to lead ceremonies

Over 13,000 security personnel deployed as Ayodhya prepares for the Ram Temple event | 8,000 guests have been invited to attend the ceremony set to begin 20 minutes after noon | Almost all Opposition political leaders invited to the ceremony have declined to attend the event

Mayank Bhanu
LICHCHITRA

The temple town of Ayodhya was decked with flowers, filled with bhajans, and covered with a multi-layered security blanket on the eve of the *pran pratishtha*, or consecration ceremony, to be held at the Ram Temple on Monday. In the culmination of a decades-long religious and political movement to restore the worship of Lord Ram in a new temple at what is considered his birthplace, the rituals to consecrate the idol are expected to begin at 20 minutes past noon in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and almost 13,000 invited guests, and will be watched by lakhs of devotees via live telecast across the world.



Stage is set: A view of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Sunday ahead of the consecration ceremony. >

More than 13,000 security personnel have been deployed in Ayodhya, officers from the National Security Guard and Special Protection Group, commandos of the Central Reserve Police Force, the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force, the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorist Squad, and the Provincial Armed Constabulary are camping in the district, along with intelligence Bureau personnel. Security checks for vehicles and individuals have been made to deal with any health emergency, especially in view of the tiling work.

The new Shri Ram Temple, while aerial and artificial intelligence surveillance has been deployed to ensure the safety of the guests and the success of the mega event. Arrangements have been made to deal with any health emergency, especially in view of the tiling work. The new Shri Ram

President writes to PM on event's significance

NEW DELHI
President Droupadi Murmu, in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said that the inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya is a "unparalleled expression of the eternal soul of India". It is the first time a president also appointed Mr. Modi's rigorous 13-day consecration ahead of the event. > PAGE 8

Chief Minister's visit to temple

CHANDIGARH
Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda visited the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Sunday. He was accompanied by several ministers and officials. Hooda expressed his admiration for the temple and its significance to the Indian people. > PAGE 8

Guest list

U.P. Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat will attend the ceremony, along with a guest list of prominent politicians, leading industrialists, top film stars, sportsmen, diplomats, judges, priests, and artists. > PAGE 8

Almost all Opposition political leaders invited to the ceremony have declined to attend the event

Almost all Opposition political leaders invited to the ceremony have declined to attend. As part of the preparations, the Trust readied 50,000 chairs to be distributed to the guests after the *pran pratishtha*, along with meals prepared with desi ghee to be served on the temple premises. > PAGE 8

Balancing record



Children from Karbi Anglong district in Assam who set a new Guinness world record for the longest line of people walking on stilts with a total of 722 members forming a two kilometre line on Sunday. (PHOTO: SHANTANU)

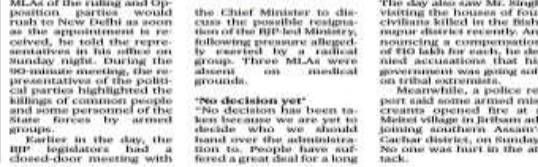
Biren to seek meet with PM as BJP MLAs discuss resignation

The Hindu Bureau
DHARMA/WAHANI

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has asked the representatives of 10 non-BJP political parties that he would on Monday seek an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the ongoing unrest in the state. A team consisting of MLAs of the ruling and Opposition parties would talk to New Delhi as soon as the appointment is reconfirmed, he told the representatives in his office on Sunday night. During the 90-minute meeting, the representatives of the political parties would discuss the killings of common people and some personnel of the army by armed groups. Earlier in the day, the BJP legislators had a closed-door meeting with

Biren to seek meet with PM as BJP MLAs discuss resignation

time and their conditions should not be overlooked," Mr. Singh said. "This is not the time for politicking. All political parties have joined hands to chalk out the best strategy to ensure peace in the state." Bharat Chandra Laxung, the chief spokesperson of the Janata Dal (United) said. Accusations denied The day also saw Mr. Singh visiting the houses of four citizens killed in the Bishnupur district recently. Announcing a compensation of 10 lakh for each, he denied accusations that his government was going soft on tribal extremists. Meanwhile, a police report said some armed militants opened fire at a forest village in Imphal adjoining northern Assam's Cachar district on Sunday. No one was hurt in the attack. "No decision yet" "No decision has been taken because we are yet to decide who we should hand over the administration to. People have suffered a great deal for a long



N. Biren Singh

Hundreds of thousands protest against 'anti-immigration' far-right in Germany

Agence France-Press

Hundreds of thousands joined rallies in Germany against the far-right AfD party again on Sunday, the culmination of a week of protest that has seen thousands turn out in unusually large numbers across the country. Between Friday and Sunday alone, protesters were organised in around 100 cities, with organisers suspecting a further million people had gone out into the streets to send a "signal against the AfD". The influx of demonstrators was so large in Munich on Sunday that organisers were forced to cancel a planned march and ask people to disperse for safety reasons. Around 1,00,000 had turned up for the protest, according to local police, four times as many as were registered for the event. An earlier estimate announced to the crowd had put the figure at 2,00,000. In Berlin, some 1,00,000 people gathered to protest in the city centre on Sunday evening, according to police figures cited by regional broadcaster RBB. The wave of mobilisation against the far-right party was sparked by a February 10 report by investigative outlet Correctiv,

which revealed that AfD members had discussed the negotiation of immigrants and "non-assimilated citizens" at a meeting with extremists. Conspiracy theories Among the participants at the talks was Martin Sellner, a leader of Austria's identitarian movement, which subscribes to the "great replacement" conspiracy theory that claims there is a plot by non-white migrants to replace Europe's "native" white population. News of the gathering sent shockwaves across Germany as the far-right party confirmed the presence of its members at the meeting, but has denied taking on the "renigration" project championed by Mr. Sellner. Protesters first came together last weekend in Berlin and Potsdam, where the extremist meeting was held, and have gathered since. On Sunday, demonstrators outside the German Parliament in Berlin carried signs which said "No Nazis" and "Nazi out". In Saxony, the capital of the eastern region of Saxony, where the far-right party is leading in the polls, authorities had to alter the course of a protest march. The procession was lengthened to make room for "a very large number of participants", police said on X. In Cologne, party organisers estimated 70,000 people gathered at a three-hour city on Sunday, while in Bremen, local police said

80,000 people had turned out in the centre. Katrin Rehring said she hoped the protest against the far-right would "make a lot of people rethink" their stance. "Some might not be sure whether they will vote for the AfD or not, but after this protest they simply cannot," she said in Munich. Politicians, as well as church leaders and Bundesliga football managers have called on people to stand against the far right. "Take a stand" Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Germany's first democratically elected leader, said in a statement last weekend, and urged citizens alike to stand against the far right. "We must stand for democracy, and in turn, on all of us," he urged. "We must take a stand - for cohesion, for tolerance, for our democratic Germany." Interior Minister Nancy Faesl went as far as to say in the newspapers of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung that the far-right meeting was "a blatant violation of the horrible Wannsee conference", where the Nazis planned the extermination of European Jews in 1942. The protests against the far right could "restore trust in democracy and peace", Josef Schuster, the head of the German Council of Jews in Germany, told broadcaster Welt TV.

Balancing record



Sticking together: Men from Karbi Anglong district in Assam who set a new Guinness world record for the longest line of people walking on stilts with a total of 721 members forming a two-kilometre line on Sunday. SPECIALARRANGEMENT



Central agencies turn accused into approvers: Kerala CM

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Sunday lashed out at Central investigation agencies over the prime accused in a cooperative bank scam case turning into approvers.

In an apparent reference to the accused in the scam at the Karuvannur Service Cooperative Bank recently, expressing their willingness to become prosecution witnesses, he said this was being done as part of a plan to target political opponents. He was speaking after inaugurating the ninth Kerala Cooperative Congress here.

Mr. Vijayan said greed had led to corrupt practices in several sectors, including the cooperative sector.

He said the department was currently implementing safeguards to prevent those who are part of the administration of cooperatives from obtaining loans for themselves or for their relatives through wrongful means.

Shah sets three-year deadline to free Chhattisgarh from Maoist menace

The Minister calls for a detailed road map with inputs from all stakeholders concerned to rid the State of pockets of Left Wing extremism, calls for better implementation of schemes of the Central and State governments in Naxal violence-affected districts, especially villages in proximate areas

Shubhoboy Sikdar
RAIPUR

A review meeting of Chhattisgarh's Left Wing Extremism (LWE) situation, in Raipur on Sunday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah emphasised the need to free the affected pockets of the State within the next three years.

Those who attended the meeting included Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, his two Deputies Arun Sao and Vijay Sharma, as well as senior officials, including the Union Home Secretary, Director Intelligence Bureau, and Chief Secretary of Chhattisgarh. The heads of the Central Reserve Police Force and Chhattisgarh Police were also present at the meeting.

Pointing out that the problem was confined to certain pockets of Chhattisgarh, Mr. Shah stressed the need for a detailed road map to be drawn up by all the stakeholders concerned, particularly steps relating to the targeting of the entire ecosystem sustaining LWE. Last year, Mr. Shah had said that the Centre was working to

ward off the Maoist problem by 2024. "The Union Home Minister directed the State Police to fill up the remaining security gaps, ensure comprehensive investigations, closely monitor prosecution, choke financial streams and continue intelligence-led operations. He also stressed the need to review all inputs shared through the Multi-Agency Centre and operationalise the same. A road map was issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs noted.

At the meeting, Mr. Shah also emphasised on better implementation of Central and State government schemes in the Naxal-affected districts and "utilisation of security force camps to ensure the benefits of these schemes (reach) villages in proximate areas". He mentioned that the MHA



Amit Shah chairs a review meeting of the LWE situation in Chhattisgarh at Raipur on Sunday.

should be flexible both in the allotment of funds and their usage in LWE-affected districts. Notably, in the past couple of months, the number of anti-Naxal operations have been on the rise in Raipur and other LWE-affected areas of the State. On Saturday too, the police

gunned down three Maoists in Bijnour. Three days before that, the security forces announced that they had destroyed Naxal camps and weapon manufacturing units on the Bastiagarh-Maharashtra border.

Earlier, two persons—Nisar Ahmed alias Hajir and Mushtaq Hussain alias Chacha—were arrested for allegedly harbouring the terrorists.

The NIA said the duo had provided logistic support to the terrorists for more than two months and had sheltered them in a hideout, which they constructed on the directions of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) handlers, namely Saifullah alias Sajid Jais, Abu Qatal alias Qatal Shindi and Mohammad Qasim.

A team of NIA officials had regularly camped in the hideout since the arrest during the course of investigation. The investigations in the case are still under process, the NIA said.

Revanth Reddy appoints close aides as Telangana government advisers

R. Radhikanth Reddy
HYDRABAD

The Telangana government has appointed Vem Narendar Reddy, Shabir Ali and Harekara Venugopal as advisers to the government in the rank and status of Minister of State.

Mr. Vem Narendar Reddy, a close confidant of Mr. Revanth Reddy, has been appointed Adviser (Public Affairs) to the Chief Minister. Mr. Narendar Reddy was

appointed Adviser to Protocol and Public Relations Department. He will hold the rank of a Minister of State.

Dr. Malvi Ravi has been appointed Special Representative of the Telangana government in New Delhi. Mr. Ravi, who is the brother of Deputy Chief Minister Bharat Vikramarka and a strong supporter of the Chief Minister, held the same position in unaffiliated Andhra Pradesh in the Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government.

He is also the former MP for Nagarkurnool. Over the past two years,

he has been the eyes and ears of Mr. Revanth Reddy. Former Minister Shabir Ali has been appointed Adviser to SC, ST, BC and Minority Departments in the rank of Minister of State in Telangana.

Senior supporter Mr. Ali, another aide of the Chief Minister, was one of the few who stood behind him when he was vying to become the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president.

Telangana Congress Protocol in charge Harekara Venugopal has been ap-

pointed Adviser to Protocol and Public Relations Department. He will hold the rank of a Minister of State.

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He is also the former MP for Nagarkurnool.

BRS faults Revanth for naming advisers

The Hindu Bureau

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) has criticised Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for appointing four advisers having the rank of Cabinet Ministers to the government.

"There is a huge gap between Mr. Revanth Reddy's words and deeds," BRS leader Kavala Siddhar Reddy said here on Sunday. "It was he who questioned the need for advisers when he was in the Opposition and said that there would not be any ad-

visers system in case the Congress forms the government," he said.

Mr. Revanth Reddy appointed four advisers in less than two months after assuming charge, the BRS leader pointed out, adding that former CM K. Chandrababu Naidu had appointed retired officers as advisers for their guidance in administration. He alleged that Mr. Revanth Reddy had appointed Vem Narendar Reddy as an adviser as he had cooperated with him in the cash-for-vote scandal of 2018.

Daily art



Participants working on their lantern designs during a competition held by the Thiruvananthapuram Rathinasa Sabha, in front of the Padmanabhaswamy Temple in the Kerala capital on Sunday.

Nitish inaugurates 500-bed hospital in Samastipur district of Bihar

Amit Ghatak
PATNA

On the eve of the consecration ceremony of the Aapditya Rain Temple, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Sunday inaugurated a 500-bed hospital named Shri Ram Janki Medical College and Hospital (SRJMCH) in Samastipur district of Bihar.

The foundation stone was laid by Mr. Kumar in 2008. The "earthquake-resistant" building constructed at a cost of ₹80 crore at Sarai Rajnagar has advanced medical facilities. An annual intake of 100 students is accommodated. The hospital is equipped with all the necessary medical facilities. After inaugurating the SRJMCH, the Chief Minister, along with Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav, inspected the hospital.



The newly constructed 500-bed hospital in Samastipur district of Bihar.

for their treatment". The fund was donated by Shri Ram Janki Math and the hospital has been named after the Math.

The CM pointed out that the Central government too had contributed to the construction of the hospital. He said that it would become a 1,000-bed hospital in a few years.

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Sitaram Rai was also present. P. Pradyumn Singh, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry, Vijay Kumar Choudhary, Education Minister, Ajay Mehta, Deputy Speaker of Bihar Assembly, Maheshwar Hazari, Rajya Sabha MP Ramnath Thakur were present.

Police in A.P. foil fast of 'Kodi-Kathi' Srinu's family

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The police on Sunday foiled the indefinite fast of Srinu and J. Subba Raju, the mother and brother of J. Srinivas, alias "Kodi-Kathi" Srinu, and shifted them to hospital amid resistance from activists of various organisations.

They had been fasting since January 9 demanding that Srinuva be granted bail in the case on the alleged attack on Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, then Leader of Opposition, in the run-up to the elections in 2019 at the Vijayachandrababu Srinu had since been in jail pending trial.

Digital University Kerala introduces Kairali AI Chip, the first-of-its-kind

Sarath Babu George
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Propelling Kerala's buoy into seeking avant-garde technological, Digital University Kerala has designed the State's first self-proven artificial intelligence (AI) chip - Kairali AI Chip.

The chip leverages unique features to deliver capabilities such as speed, power efficiency and scalability. It is touted to contribute its edge intelligence (or edge AI) in a wide array of areas including agricultural, aerospace, mobile phone and consumer electronics, drones and security.

The integrated circuit has been designed by a

team led by Dean (Academics) Alex P. James at the AI Chip Centre that functions at the Digital University Kerala.

The development, Professor James said, not only highlights the university's excellence in technological research but also its role in shaping future technological advancements.



Kairali AI Chip.

key industries," he said. In the agriculture sector, the chip can revolutionise precision farming techniques by enabling real-time monitoring of crop health and nutrient levels. In the environmental sector, it can be used for data analysis and real-time analytics, security and surveillance.

The device also holds immense potential in the mobile phone industry by enabling advanced features like real-time language translation, enhanced image processing and AI-powered personal assistants.

Professor James said the chip can also become a game-changer for autonomous driving, which is crucial for self-driving cars. In addition, its edge computing capability, low latency and robustness make it ideal for real-time data processing and security and surveillance.

Security tightened as Anganwadi staff plan 'Chalo Vijayawada'

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The Police Department in Andhra Pradesh has made security arrangements in view of the "Chalo Vijayawada and Tadepalli" programme planned by protesting Anganwadi workers on Saturday. The police have issued a notice to their demands.

Almost 1,000 lakh Anganwadi workers and helpers have been protesting for the past few days. The police have issued a notice to their demands. The police have issued a notice to their demands.

Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPc. is in force and no protest is allowed, the police say.

The police have issued a notice to their demands. The police have issued a notice to their demands.

The police have issued a notice to their demands. The police have issued a notice to their demands.

Pilgrimage season over in Sabarimala; temple closes

The Hindu Bureau
BATHANATHURTA

Marking the end of a pilgrimage season that had closed after a designate of the temple which prohibited the pilgrims to enter the temple and offered prayers here on Sunday.

The hill temple is now closed after a designate of the temple which prohibited the pilgrims to enter the temple and offered prayers here on Sunday.

Digital University Kerala introduces Kairali AI Chip, the first-of-its-kind

Sarath Babu George
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

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team led by Dean (Academics) Alex P. James at the AI Chip Centre that functions at the Digital University Kerala.

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Vast potential

"Kairali AI Chip facilitates edge intelligence, which allows the complete storage and processing of information from the sensory circuits with minimum power and latency, which helps in offloading cloud computations. The chip's potential applications are vast and varied, impacting several



Kairali AI Chip

key industries," he said.

In the agriculture sector, the chip can revolutionise precision farming techniques by enabling real-time monitoring of crop health, soil conditions and environmental factors, and thereby pave the way for more efficient use of resources and better crop

yields. The device also holds immense potential in the mobile phone industry by enabling advanced features like real-time language translation, enhanced image processing and AI-powered personal assistants.

Professor James said the chip can also become a game-changer for autonomous vehicles by providing the necessary computing power for real-time processing of sensory information which is crucial for efficient autonomous driving. In addition, its edge computing capability can enable faster and efficient facial recognition algorithms, threat detection and real-time analytics in security and surveillance.

Better use of technology needs free access

Data from the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023 released recently, confirm that the story of widening access to smartphones across the country continues. The results show that 92% of the 14-16 year olds who were surveyed reported knowing how to use a smartphone. What does this access mean in terms of education or learning?



Madhav Chavan is a co-founder of Pratham

First, although over 90% of boys and girls reported knowing how to use a smartphone, almost half of them, or 44% of the boys, owned their own smartphone. Among girls, only 20% owned one. The difference in ownership of devices, gender-based or otherwise, can limit what those devices can be used for and can affect some abilities but not others. For example, the ability to browse for information is equal among either boys or girls, regardless of whether they own the device or simply have access to one at home. Watching YouTube video, which also falls under the category of browsing, is equally easy among boys who do not own their phones. But the skill of finding a video and sharing it depends on ownership of the device.

The examples above describe tasks that the youth who were surveyed did on a smartphone their own, a household member's, or a neighbour's in the presence of the ASER survey team. Other examples of how phone ownership makes a difference are visible in the youths' self-reported use of smartphones. For example, over 80% of those surveyed reported having used social media in the week prior to the survey, but the proportion of those who were familiar with safety features such as changing a password or blocking a profile was largely dependent on ownership. In short, these results suggest that while access to a common smartphone can be described as basic or expected, owning a smart device is necessary for deeper access to information and

Data from the recently released Annual Status of Education Report supports the point that once technology is in the hands of motivated users without constraints, they will learn to use it.

services. Smartphone skills, like all other skills, need motivation combined with the opportunity to learn. Entertainment is a great motivator. Products such as WhatsApp and YouTube have clearly motivated and helped youngsters to learn to use the new technology without a gender bias. However, in cases of certain online services and commercial activities, girls seem to show less participation than boys. They have less to do with barriers of technology and more to do with social obstacles. Where there are no social barriers such as using the device for school-related work, ownership of devices and gender make only a small difference: nearly 70% of youth, boys and girls, both report having used phones for studies at least once in the reference week. ASER 2023 cannot say if this has made an impact on the learning of school subjects.

Once technology, any technology, is in the hands of motivated users without constraints, they learn to use it. Motivation to use and learn new skills of how children play up their COVID-19 pandemic. Without being taught, large populations adopted the new technology and its applications that were useful and user-friendly, but even before the full push of the pandemic, we saw an example on a fairly large scale of how children pick up skills without being taught.

An earlier experiment in 2017, in an early Pratham initiative which integrates digital technology into education, small groups of 6- to 8-year olds were each given a tablet to share. Their mothers were given responsibility for safe handling, with the assurance that there would be no penalty for loss or damage. Nearly 400 villages in Maharashtra, India, were included in the study. Each tablet had a password to ensure that no external content was accessed. Within two weeks we discovered that passwords in half the tablets spread over

villages in all three states had been changed, and the children were having a hard time at the expense of the Pratham staff. In those days it was unlikely that the children had prior exposure to devices such as tablets and smartphones in the village. But obviously some people knew how, and the knowledge spread like wildfire, motivated by the opportunity to play mischief. Simultaneously we removed passwords in all the tablets, and the groups of children were made responsible for protection of the content. Not surprisingly, this worked very well although mistakes were made every now and then. In the above experiment, supported by the Sarva Mangal Family Trust and Google.org, ownership of the tablet was with the children by rotation and they were free to play with the device. Almost similar to the 'Rule in the Wall' project of Professor Jagata Mitra, children learned on their own and from each other. Pratham staff helped but did not teach. It is not clear if this impacted 'progress' in school subjects but boys and girls became much more comfortable with using technology.

There were different phases of this experiment including one where children started filming, editing, sharing and uploading their own videos on given themes or topics. In one phase almost half the 4,204 Pratham leaders were girls (49%). In other words, girls used the device extensively and boys when they are given equal and unfiltered access to the devices. In contrast, when their access is constrained, their learning also is likely to be affected negatively. The ASER 2023 reports a lower ability of girls to perform tasks such as accessing services, or making payments, or being safe on the internet. This is strongly related to constraints in using the device due to absence of ownership.

Five bicycles gave a boost to the enrolment of girls in secondary schools. Perhaps, free smartphones with internet access are round the corner?

Visiting Kerala with a strategy in mind

The BJP hopes the Prime Minister's frequent visits will fetch it political dividends

STATE OF PLAY
Biju Sundar
bijusundar@hindu.com



Biju Sundar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visits to Kerala and his engagement with the community leaders have activated political discussions about the Bharatiya Janata Party's strategy to win seats in the Lok Sabha from Kerala, where the party has not been successful so far.

Last week, Mr. Modi, went on a two-day visit to the state, led a lively roadshow in Kochi during the evening and visited the five Krishna temple at Tiruvananthapuram the following day. He attended the wedding ceremony of a daughter of actor-turned-politician Mr. Prithviraj, a potential candidate of the BJP in the Thiruvananthapuram constituency. He also visited the Thiruvananthapuram temple in Nattika, Thiruvananthapuram.

His visit was the second time in a fortnight. Just two weeks earlier, he had led a high-profile roadshow and subsequently addressed the 'Jeevanakathi' (Motherhood With Modi) in Thiruvananthapuram. In that speech, he underscored the BJP government's commitment to women's empowerment at the national level and presented it as a tangible embodiment of "Modi's guarantee" to the women.

Mr. Modi has combined a strategy of development, spirituality, and Hinduism to woo the electorate. His temple visits are carefully planned and executed without any fanfare. He has realised the importance of temples and their role in Hinduism. His roadshows in Kerala after the Supreme Court judgment declared the custom of prohibiting women in their 'monstrating years' at Sabarimala unconstitutional.

Election fever has already gripped the Thiruvananthapuram constituency after his visit. Besides, Mr. Modi's visit to the five Krishna temple of Tiruvananthapuram in Nattika, was a connect

ahead of the Ram Mandir construction in Ayodhya. But there could be more to it than meets the eye.

In Nattika, one of the seven Assembly segments in Thiruvananthapuram, all three main candidates are BJP. The Congress leader T.N. Prabhakaran, Rajaji Madhav, Thomas, the CPI and Mr. Gopi as the BJP's nominee secured between 18,000 to 22,000 votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha poll. Mr. Prabhakaran is from Nattika and had represented this segment twice.

This apart, Mr. Modi hosted over 100 Christian leaders from all denominations in Delhi on Christmas last year. The outreach programme was not new as Mr. Modi had not leading Church leaders during his visit to Kerala in April 2022.

During his recent visit, Mr. Modi also briefly met T.J. Joseph, the former professor of Newman College at Thodupuzha in Idukki district, whose hand was chopped off in 2010, by a group of activists from the now-banned Popular Front of India. Mr. Joseph was also intended to send a message to the Christians.

India among nations overusing "Watch" group antibiotics

Resistance among Indian patients to certain types of antibiotics is among the highest in the world

DATA POINT
Rebecca Rose Varghese and Vignesh Radhakrishnan

In the Data Point published last week ("Over 36% patients use more than one antibiotic", January 17), results from a government survey showed that an overwhelming number of inpatients are prescribed antibiotics by hospitals across India. Findings also showed that many patients were given more than one antibiotic. Further, the data showed that over 55% of such antibiotic prescriptions belonged to the "Watch" group as classified by the World Health Organization (WHO). I.e., medicines reserved for only severe infections.

Data also show that resistance among Indian patients to certain types of antibiotics is among the highest in the world. In India, for many antibiotic-bacterium combinations, the percentage of infections were from resistant bacteria. For instance, in the ceftriaxone antibiotic-Klebsiella pneumoniae bacteria combination, over 87.4% of infections were from resistant bacteria as shown in Table 1. Table 1 also lists the broader antibiotic group these drugs belong to and the best and the worst countries in terms of resistance to various antibiotic-bacterium combinations. For instance, the ceftriaxone antibiotic belongs to the group called third-generation cephalosporins.

It is telling that the resistance proportion among Indian patients was available. Clearly, India stood out that year, with 56% of all antibiotics that were prescribed from the "Watch" group. Russia was a distant second. On the other hand, Norway, Finland, Netherlands and the U.K. — which featured among nations with low antibiotic resistance — also had low "Watch" group antibiotic forms less than 20% of the total consumption in these countries.

There is also a clear divide between countries with high resistance and low resistance. As shown in Table 1, responsible antibiotic usage has resulted in low antibiotic resistance among developed countries such as Norway, Iceland, Netherlands and the U.K. In contrast, along with India, patients in Russia, Egypt and Pakistan have developed high antibiotic resistance.

Chart 1 explains this relationship further. Chart 2 shows the composition of "Watch" group antibiotics among AWaRe categories in select countries as of 2018-17. AWaRe was developed by WHO based on the impact of different antibiotics on antimicrobial resistance so that they can be used appropriately. It broadly categorises antibiotics into "Access", "Watch", and "Reserve". The "Access" group is the most advised as it minimises the potential for resistance. "Watch" group antibiotics are only for specific and limited use, and result in increased antibiotic resistance. The "Reserve" group should only be used in life-threatening conditions. According to WHO, 60% of total antibiotic consumption in a country should be from the "Access" group. It is a worry that in India, the opposite is true. About 55% of total antibiotic consumption in the country in 2018-17 was from the "Watch" group. This share went up to 64% during the pandemic. Other countries where was available. Clearly, India stood out that year, with 56% of all antibiotics that were prescribed from the "Watch" group. Russia was a distant second. On the other hand, Norway, Finland, Netherlands and the U.K. — which featured among nations with low antibiotic resistance — also had low "Watch" group antibiotic forms less than 20% of the total consumption in these countries.

Too much of a good thing

The data for the table and chart were sourced from the report WHO, WHO Reports on Surveillance of Antibiotic Consumption and WHO's Global AMR data

Table 1: The table lists antibiotic-bacterium combination, the category these drugs belong to, and nations with high and low resistance

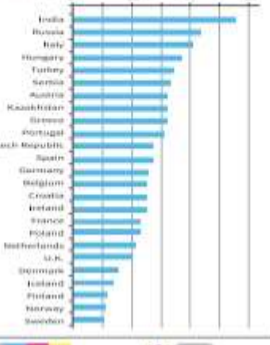
Antibiotic	Bacterium	Drug group	India (%)	Best (%)	Worst (%)
S. pneumoniae	Klebsiella pneumoniae	3rd gen. cephalosporins	87.4	Egypt (81.5)	Netherlands (14.2)
E. coli	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	79.8	Pakistan (72.5)	U.K. (10%)
Acinetobacter spp.	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	70.4	Qatar (67.7)	Japan (10%)
S. pneumoniae	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	70.0	Egypt (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
Acinetobacter spp.	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	67.9	Qatar (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
E. coli	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	76.2	Qatar (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
S. pneumoniae	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	69.3	Egypt (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
E. coli	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	76.0	Qatar (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
S. pneumoniae	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	64.4	Qatar (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
E. coli	Ciprofloxacin	Fluoroquinolones	70.3	Pakistan (70.3)	Norway (6%)
Acinetobacter spp.	Aminoglycosides	Aminoglycosides	69.8	Russia (67.7)	Japan (10%)
S. aureus	Methicillin	Beta-lactams	68.7	Russia (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
E. coli	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	63.0	France (63%)	Finland (10%)
E. coli	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	62.7	Qatar (67.7)	Netherlands (14.2)
S. pneumoniae	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	61.3	Uganda (61.3)	Netherlands (14.2)
S. pneumoniae	Fluoroquinolones	Fluoroquinolones	60.8	Qatar (67.7)	Japan (10%)
S. pneumoniae	Carbapenem	3rd gen. cephalosporins	59.9	Qatar (67.7)	U.K. (10%)

Gold Price Skyrockets Following Floating of Franc

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 22, 1974

PARIS, Jan. 21. The price of gold sky-rocketed to a 108 an ounce here to-day following the floating of the franc by France over the week-end. The franc itself dipped in value by about five per cent. The atmosphere of instability and uncertainty resulting from France's abrupt week-end decision to float the franc has led to a flurry of buying for cover in gold, monetary experts said. The price of the 12.5 kilo gold bar soared to an all-time high equivalent level of \$118 2/8 ounce up from \$105 on Friday. The selling British pound-to-day plunged three cents to its lowest level in history in the wake of French action. The pound, worth \$2.50 a year ago, plummeted to less than \$2.16 when markets opened. Later, bankers said that the Bank of England stepped in to shore it up by selling off 100 million pounds recovered a little to \$2.1658. In London gold rose to an all-time record of \$147.75 an ounce — a nine per cent increase over the previous high recorded on Friday — at the morning's trading to-day following the floating of the franc. The U.S. dollar also rose, with dealers quoting 3.4530-4300 Swiss franc at the close against 3.3700-30 at the close on Friday. — Reuters, UPI, AP and AP.

Chart 2: The chart shows the composition (%) of "Watch" group antibiotics among AWaRe categories



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 22, 1974

Gold Price Skyrockets Following Floating of Franc

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A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 22, 1924

South Africa.
NEW GOVERNOR GENERAL.
DELHI, AERIALS. (Reuters's Special Service.)
CAPE, TOWN, Jan. 21. A magnificent welcome was given to the Earl of Athlone, the new Governor-General, who, accompanied by his wife and family, arrived here in perfect summer weather this morning. The city was gaily bedecked and there was a brilliant welcome at the City Hall where there was a most representative gathering of the whole of South Africa, which included many members of the Cape British Indian Union presented an address declaring that Indians everywhere cherished feelings of profound gratitude to the Royal Family for the kindness and wisdom with which Queen Victoria and King Edward ruled over millions of Indians. The address spoke appreciatively of the King Emperor's anxiety for the welfare of Indians and was concluded that the Earl of Athlone would share this regarding Indian subjects in South Africa.

Too much of a good thing

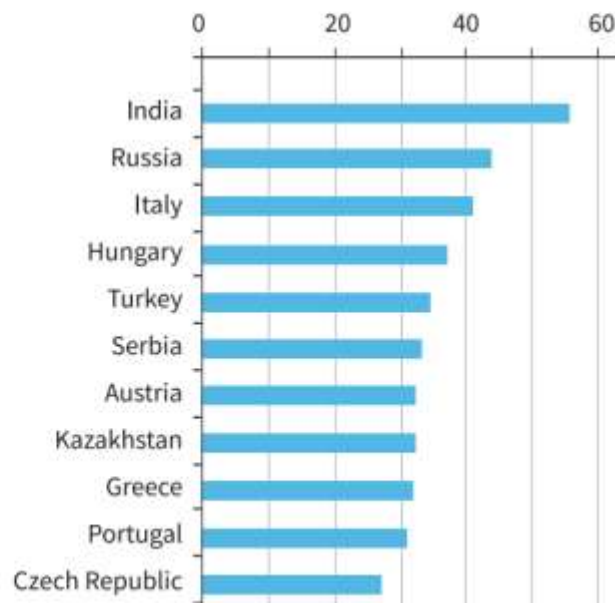
The data for the table and chart were sourced from the report titled, 'WHO Report on Surveillance of Antibiotic Consumption' and WHO's Global AMR data

Table 1 : The table lists antibiotic-bacterium combination, the category these drugs belong to, and nations with high and low resistance

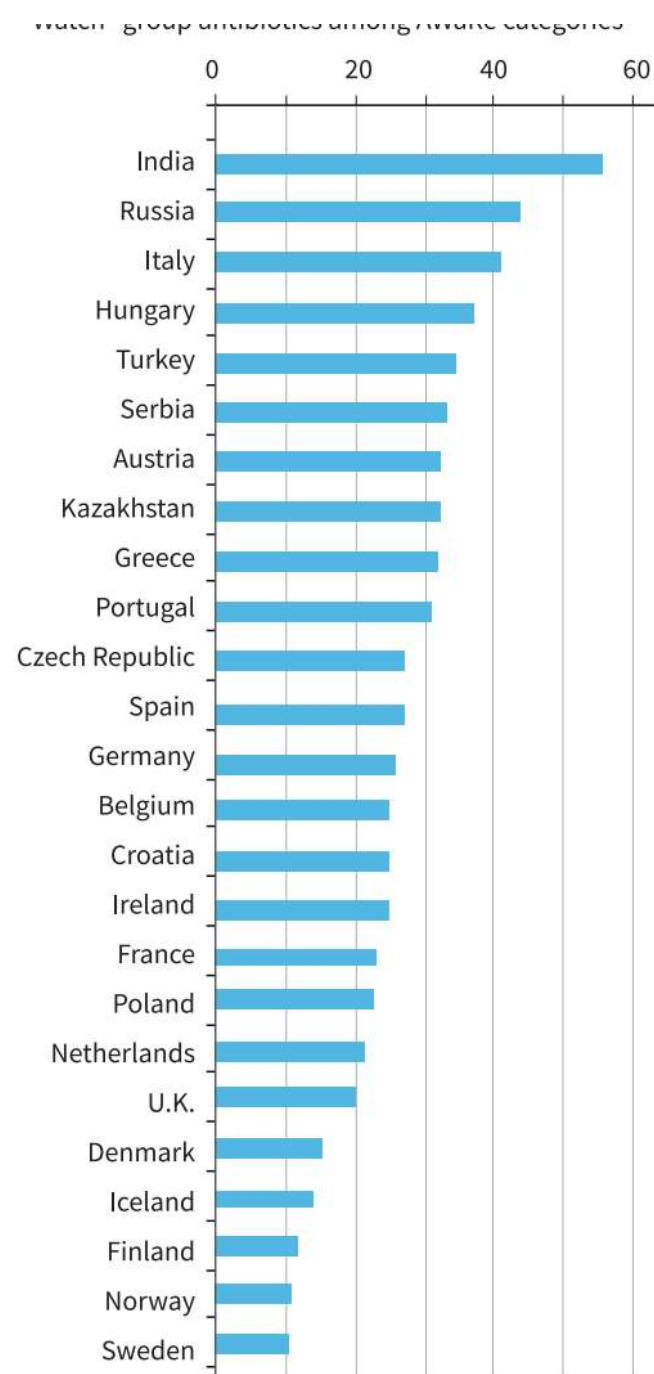
Pathogen name	Antibiotic	Category	Resistance %	High resistance	Low resistance
K. pneumoniae	Ceftriaxone	3rd gen. cephalosporines	87.4	Egypt 96%	Switzerland 5%
E. coli	Ceftriaxone	3rd gen. cephalosporines	78.8	Pakistan 72%	U.K. 10%
Acinetobacter spp.	Imipenem	Carbapenem	78.1	Oman 97%	Japan 0.8%
K. pneumoniae	Ceftazidime	3rd gen. cephalosporines	78.0	Egypt 94%	Switzerland 5%
Acinetobacter spp.	Meropenem	Carbapenem	77.9	Russia 93%	Japan 0.9%
E. coli	Cefotaxime	3rd gen. cephalosporines	76.7	Oman 79%	Norway 4%
K. pneumoniae	Cefotaxime	3rd gen. cephalosporines	76.1	Egypt 96%	Switzerland 5%
E. coli	Ceftazidime	3rd gen. cephalosporines	76.0	Nepal 81%	Norway 3%
K. pneumoniae	Cefepime	4th gen. cephalosporines	74.4	Oman 94%	Switzerland 3%
E. coli	Ciprofloxacin	Fluoroquinolones	70.5	Pakistan 71%	Norway 8%



Chart 2 : The chart shows the consumption (%) of "Watch" group antibiotics among AwaRe categories



		Sporines			3%
Acinetobacter spp.	Merope-nem	Carbape-nem	77.9	Russia 93%	Japan 0.9%
E. coli	Cefotaxime	3rd gen. cephalo-sporines	76.7	Oman 79%	Norway 4%
K. pneu-moniae	Cefotaxime	3rd gen. cephalo-sporines	76.1	Egypt 96%	Switzer-land 5%
E. coli	Ceftazi-dime	3rd gen. cephalo-sporines	76.0	Nepal 81%	Norway 3%
K. pneu-moniae	Cefepime	4th gen. cephalo-sporines	74.4	Oman 94%	Switzer-land 3%
E. coli	Ciproflo-xacin	Fluoro-quinolo-nes	70.5	Pakistan 71%	Norway 8%
Acinetobacter spp.	Amikacin	Aminogly-cosides	68.4	Russia 92%	Japan 0.7%
S. aureus	Methicillin	Be-ta-Lactam	64.7	Pakistan 69%	Nether-lands 2%
E. coli	Co-trimox-azole	-	63.0	Pakistan 67%	Finland 20%
E. coli	Cefepime	4th gen. cephalo-sporines	62.7	Oman 93%	Switzer-land 4%
K. pneu-moniae	Co-trimox-azole	-	60.1	Uganda 82%	Switzer-land 9%
K. pneu-moniae	Ciproflo-xacin	Fluoro-quinolo-nes	58.3	Russia 89%	Japan 5%
K. pneu-moniae	Ertapenem	Carbape-nem	53.2	Oman 74%	U.K. 1%



Modi Sarkar ki Guarantee

Virasat bhi, Vikas bhi

Construction of new, grand and divine Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Temple
Gift of development projects worth thousands of crores rupees to Shri Ayodhya Dham



SECURITY HIGH AS GUESTS STREAM IN FOR TEMPLE TOWN'S BIG DAY

Ayodhya wears festive look, stage set for Ram temple consecration ceremony today

PM to join Pran Pratishtha rituals for new Ram Lalla idol, will address the public later



LOCKED UP The Ram Temple on the eve of its consecration, in Ayodhya on Sunday.

Unique civilisational journey with your each step in Ayodhya: Murmu to PM

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 21

PRAN PRATISHTHA, the consecration of the new Ram Lalla idol, will be a unique civilisational journey that will be accompanied with each step taken by you, in the historical process.

RAM MANDIR AYODHYA
THE INAUGURATION

Sukhu declares holiday, Soren half day today

RAJOURAH PARASHAR & AIRYNDRA ANSARI
(CHANGELERS BANGALORE, JAN 21)

THE CONGRESS is skipping the Ram Mandir consecration ceremony in Ayodhya but one of its MPs, Sukhu, has declared a holiday in the state of Jharkhand, while another MP, Airyndra, has declared a half day in the state of West Bengal.

Temple of a billion hopes



Close to deadline, Bilkis convicts reach Godhra jail

RAJOURAH PARASHAR & AIRYNDRA ANSARI
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Business as Usual

By LINDY

IDEA EXCHANGE

One of the jobs of a president is to build consensus, so that all voices are heard.

SARAJULY
SARAJULY

GOVT & POLITICS

51% RESPONSE TO 1-POLL PANEL IN FAVOUR OF GOVT

Assam Congress chief injured as Rahul yatra convoy is 'attacked'



ASSAM, INDIA, JANUARY 21

ASSAM CONGRESS chief was injured in an attack on a yatra convoy in Assam.

Tax sops for low income slabs, higher capex likely in Budget

ANCHOAL MADHANI
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 21

FINANCE MINISTER Nirmala Sitharaman is expected to announce tax sops for low income slabs and higher capex in the Budget.

Meet the Drone Didis of Punjab — rural women set for career as drone pilots

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

DIYA & GOPAL
LUDHIANA, JANUARY 21



DIYA & GOPAL
LUDHIANA, JANUARY 21

DIYA & GOPAL are setting up a drone pilot training center for rural women in Punjab.

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INDIA OPEN SUPER 750

Finals flourish goes missing

Since November, Chirag-Satwik have done well to reach three finals but lost all - the latest against Kang-Seo at India Open Super 750

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 21

CHIRAG SHETTY and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy had a formidable reputation. That when they go deeper in tournaments, they eventually win them. In 2022 and 2023, they won eight straight finals they contested on the circuit until China Masters late last year. It is a trend right from the start of their partnership except for the French Open in 2019.

The run ended at the China Masters in November. Starting from that, the soon-to-be World No 1 pair have lost three straight finals. The latest defeat came on Sunday at the India Open Super 750 at the IG Stadium in Delhi. In a thrilling rollercoaster of a men's doubles final, Satwik-Chirag went down 15-21, 21-11, 21-18 in a 65-minute battle against the reigning World Champions Kang Min Hyuk and Seo Seung Jae.

While losing three straight finals, and two back-to-back is not ideal, perspective is important. Satwik and Chirag have made the best start to the year among all men's doubles pairs over the first two major tournaments. They have beaten current and former world champions, the current Worlds silver medallists (the Danes Astrup-Rasmussen who have been a thorn in their flesh). The three defeats in the finals have

The 2nd game was forgettable as the Koreans changed the pace of rallies, worked the angles more instead of giving any chance for Satwik to smash from the background, or the height at net for Chirag to kill.

turnout over the weekend was decent in 2023, the first time India Open had been upgraded to S750. But nothing gets the home crowd going as having home favourites to support.

The noise was deafening as the Indian duo won their first points. The match was neck-and-neck at the start, with every other point going each other's way. In fact, the first 2-point lead of the match was at 8-6 for SatChi.

Satwik-Chirag said later that they sensed the Koreans were nervous and it was evident when they made back-to-back service errors at 14-10 and 15-11. The Indians cruised through the rest of the game and took the lead to bring the roof down.

But soon after, there would be pin-drop silence (or somewhat close to that) as Seo/Kang went up 5-1 to start Game 2. This is what Satwik-Chirag had said they wanted





Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty reached their second successive final on the BWF tour this year. *Abhinav Saha*

Man Singh wins gold at Asian Marathon Championships

Hong Kong: Man Singh became only the second Indian man to clinch a gold medal at the Asian Marathon Championships as he won the race with a personal best time here on Sunday. The 34-year-old Man Singh clocked two hours, 14 minutes and 19 seconds (2:14:19) to win the competition. His earlier best was 2:16:58, which he had clocked while finishing 11th in the Mumbai Marathon last year. China's Huang Yongzheng took the silver with a time of 2:15:24 while Kyrgyzstan's Tiapkin Ilya came third in 2:18:18. Another Indian in the fray, AP Belliappa finished sixth with a time of 2:20:20. In the women's marathon race in Hong Kong, Ashvini Madan Jadhav finished eighth with a time of 2:56:42 while Jyoti Gawate ended at 11th in 3:06:20. **PTI**



Recommendations of VijayRaghavan Panel

- 
- The nine-member VijayRaghavan panel, established by the government, has recently submitted a comprehensive report addressing concerns about the functioning of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- 



What are the Major Recommendations of the VijayRaghavan Committee?



Background:



A recent Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) on Defence's Report expressed concerns about 23 out of 55 mission mode projects of DRDO facing significant delays.



CAG Report (December 2022) indicated that 67% (119 out of 178) of the projects examined failed to adhere to proposed timelines.



Major Recommendations of VijayRaghavan Committee:



Refocusing on Research and Development (R&D)



Narrowing Focus and Expertise



Role of Defence Technology Council (DTC)

रक्षा अनुसंधान एवं विकास संगठन
Raksā Anūsandhān Evam Vikās Sangathan



Agency overview

Formed	1958; 66 years ago
Headquarters	DRDO Bhavan, New Delhi
Motto	"Strength's Origin is in Science" ^[1] Sanskrit: बलस्य मूलं विज्ञानम्
Employees	30,000 (5,000 scientists) ^[2]
Annual budget	▲ ₹23,264 crore (US\$2.9 billion)(2022–23) ^[3]
Minister responsible	Rajnath Singh , Minister of Defence
Agency executive	Sameer V. Kamat, Chairman, DRDO ^[4]
Parent agency	Ministry of Defence



Study Material in Indian Languages



The Government of India has directed school and higher education regulators and heads of educational institutions to make study material in Indian languages available for all courses in the next three years.

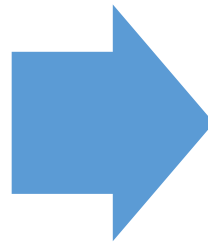


Study material for all courses under school and higher education will be made available digitally in Indian languages included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.



This decision is in line with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP-2020) to promote multilingualism in education at every level.

The government has been working in this direction for the past two years, with translation of various educational materials being done through the Anuvadini AI-based App.




In the school education ecosystem also study material is available in multiple Indian languages including over 30 languages on DIKSHA.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a blue pencil, writing on a document. The document has a grid pattern, suggesting it's a form or a report. The background is blurred, showing another person's hand and a white object, possibly a lamp or a container. The overall scene is brightly lit, with a warm, yellowish glow in the background.

Idate Commission Report


-
- *The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) stressed on the need for the implementation of the Idate Commission report.*
 - **The Commission**
 - **Headed by** - Bhiku Ramji Idate.
 - **Setup by** - The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 - **Constituted in** - 2015, for a three-year temporary term.
 - **Purpose** - For the empowerment of the [Denotified Tribes \(DNT\)](#), Semi Nomadic (SNT), and Nomadic Tribes (NT).

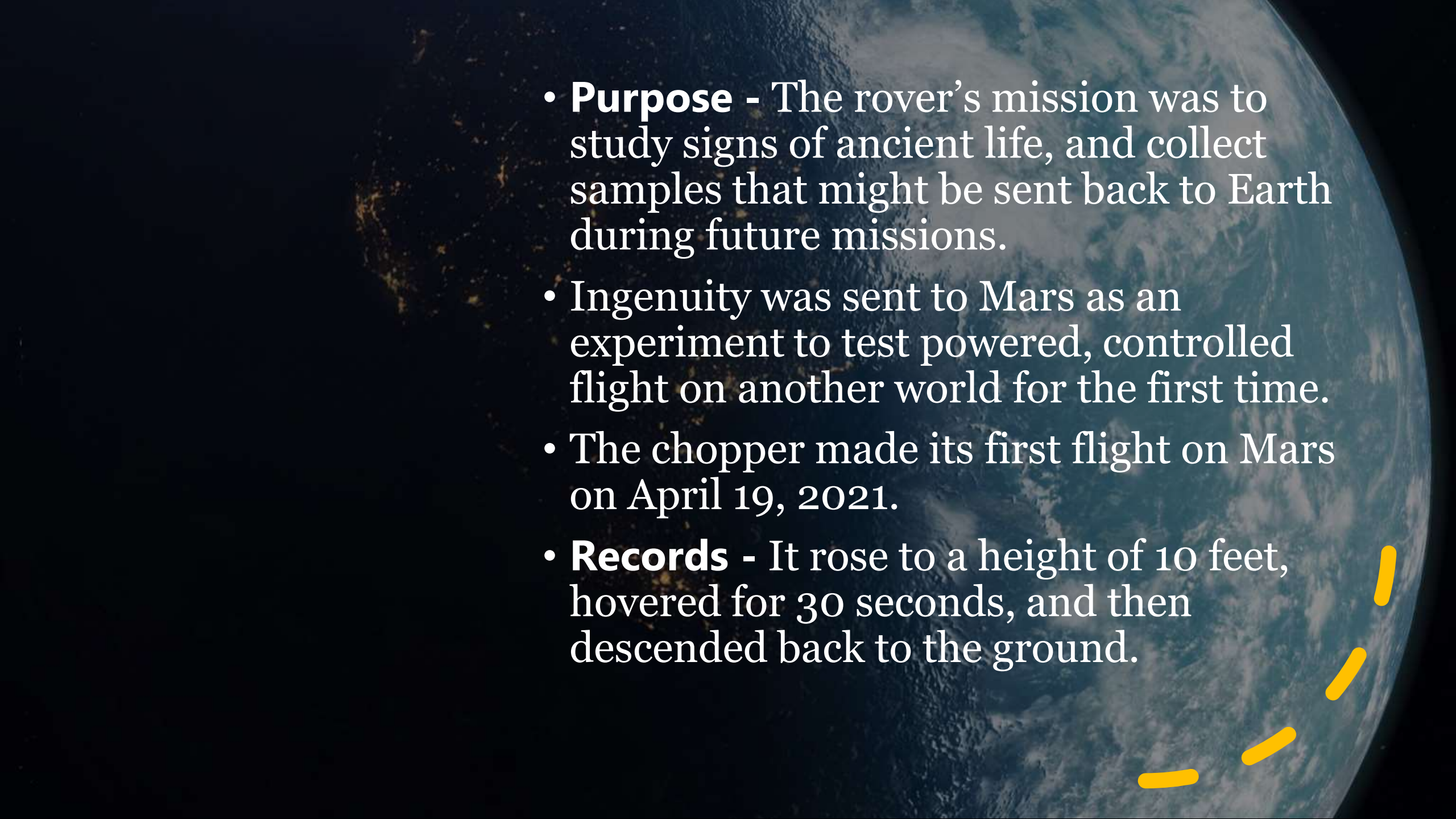
- *Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those who move from one place to another rather than living at one place all the time.*
- The committee had to submit its report identifying the above communities state wise, assessing their development status, and recommending ways to uplift them.
- In May 2018, the National Commission for Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, chaired by Bhiku Ramji Idate has submitted its report.

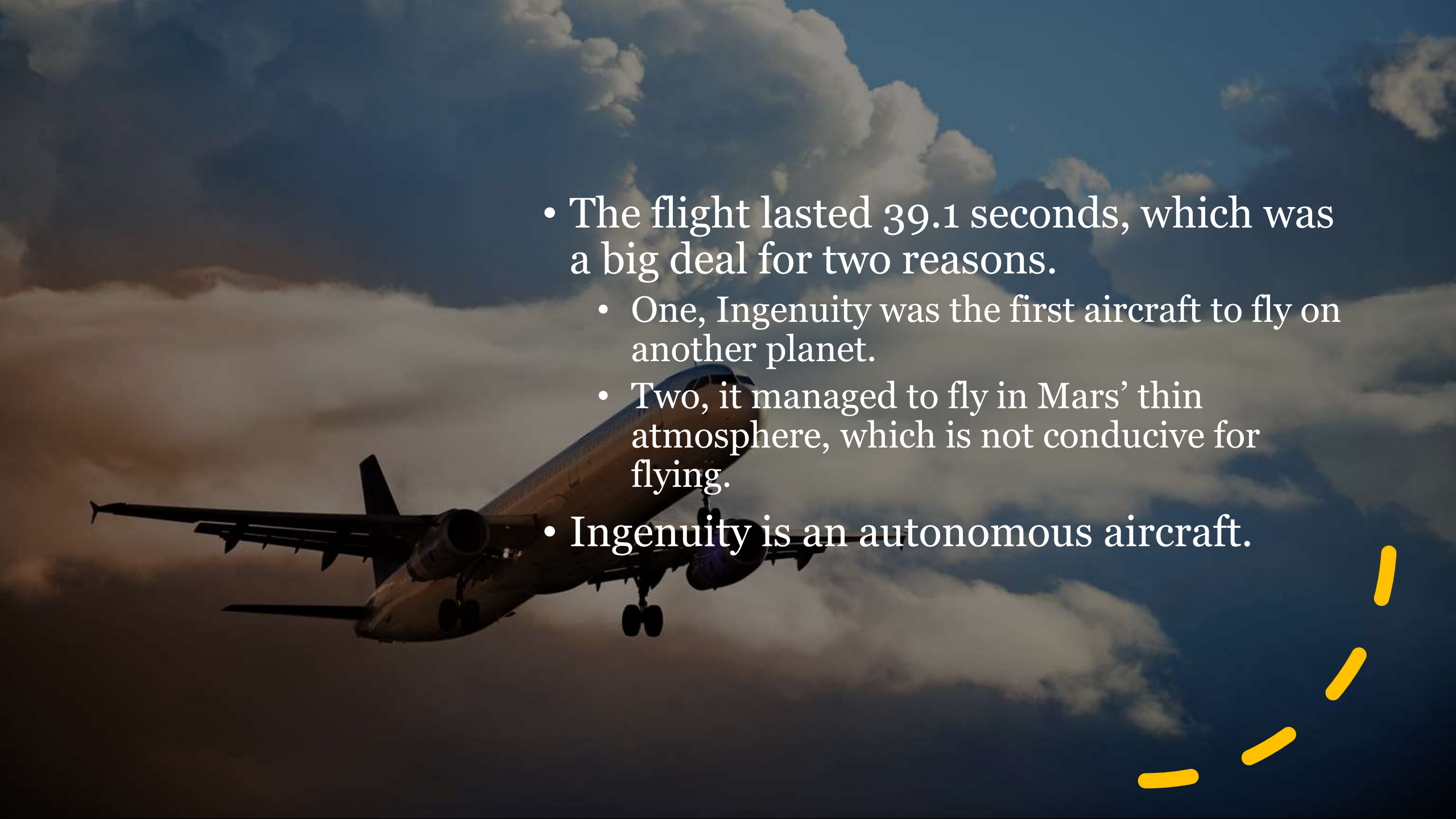

- 
- *A National Commission for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT) was first set up in 2003 and later reconstituted in 2005.*
- 



Ingenuity



- 
- *The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) regained contact with its Mars helicopter Ingenuity, after it was unable to communicate with it towards the end of its 72nd flight.*
 - **Launched on** - July 30, 2020.
 - **Ingenuity** - It is a small solar-powered helicopter that landed on the Martian surface on February 18, 2021, along with the Perseverance Rover.

- 
- **Purpose** - The rover's mission was to study signs of ancient life, and collect samples that might be sent back to Earth during future missions.
 - Ingenuity was sent to Mars as an experiment to test powered, controlled flight on another world for the first time.
 - The chopper made its first flight on Mars on April 19, 2021.
 - **Records** - It rose to a height of 10 feet, hovered for 30 seconds, and then descended back to the ground.

- 
- The flight lasted 39.1 seconds, which was a big deal for two reasons.
 - One, Ingenuity was the first aircraft to fly on another planet.
 - Two, it managed to fly in Mars' thin atmosphere, which is not conducive for flying.
 - Ingenuity is an autonomous aircraft.
- 

Somnath Temple



- 
- *Prime Minister will inaugurate the Ram temple in Ayodhya, 73 years ago; the President of India inaugurated another temple in a grand ceremony.*
 - **Located in** - Prabhas Patan, Veraval, in Gujarat.
 - **Significance** - It is the holy place of the first Aadi Jyotirling Shree Somnath Mahadev, among the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines of Shiva.
 - It is also the place where Lord Shri Krishna took his last journey.
 - **Built by** - In 1782, Maratha queen Ahalyabai Holkar built a small temple at the site.
 - **Other names** - The Somnath temple, also called Somanātha temple or Deo Patan.
- 

The temple faced several attacks from raiders, with the most damaging by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1026 CE.

Under Mughals - In the sixteenth century, Akbar permitted the worship of the linga in the Somanatha temple and appointed desais /officers to administer it.

Three generations after Akbar, Aurangzeb gave orders for its destruction.

He subsequently issued an order for its destruction and its conversion into a mosque in 1706 just before he died.

After Independence - Those ruins were demolished and the present Somnath temple was reconstructed in the Maru-Gurjara style of Hindu temple architecture.

Maru-Gurjara Style

It is also known as Solanki style is the style of West Indian temple architecture.

The style originated in Gujarat and Rajasthan from the 11th to 13th centuries, under the Chaulukya dynasty.

The Chaulukya dynasty is also called the Solanki dynasty.

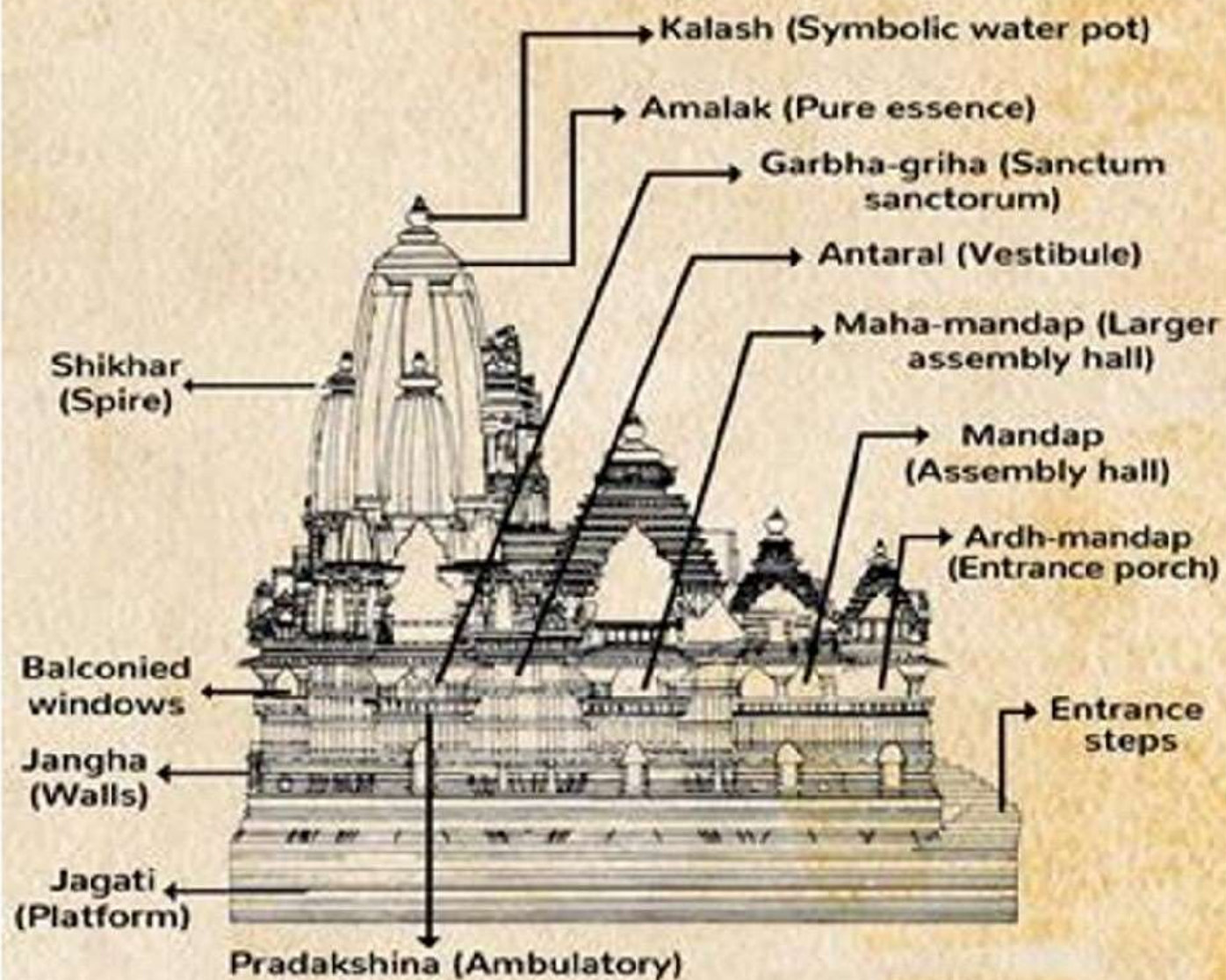
Nagara Style of Architecture

Ayodhya's Ram Temple is built on the Nagara Style of Architecture.

The Nagara style of temple architecture emerged some time in the fifth century CE, during the late Gupta period, in northern India.

It is seen in juxtaposition with the Dravida style of southern India, which too emerged in the same period.

NAGARA STYLE OF TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE



- Nagara temples are built on a raised plinth, with the garbha griha (sanctum sanctorum), where the idol of the deity rests, the most sacred part of the temple.
- Towering over the garbha griha is the shikhara (literally ‘mountain peak’), the most distinguishable aspect of Nagara style temples.





As the name suggests, shikharas are human-made representations of the natural and cosmological order, as imagined in Hindu tradition.



A typical Nagara style temple also comprises a circumambulatory passage around the garbha griha, and one or more mandapas (halls) on the same axis as it.

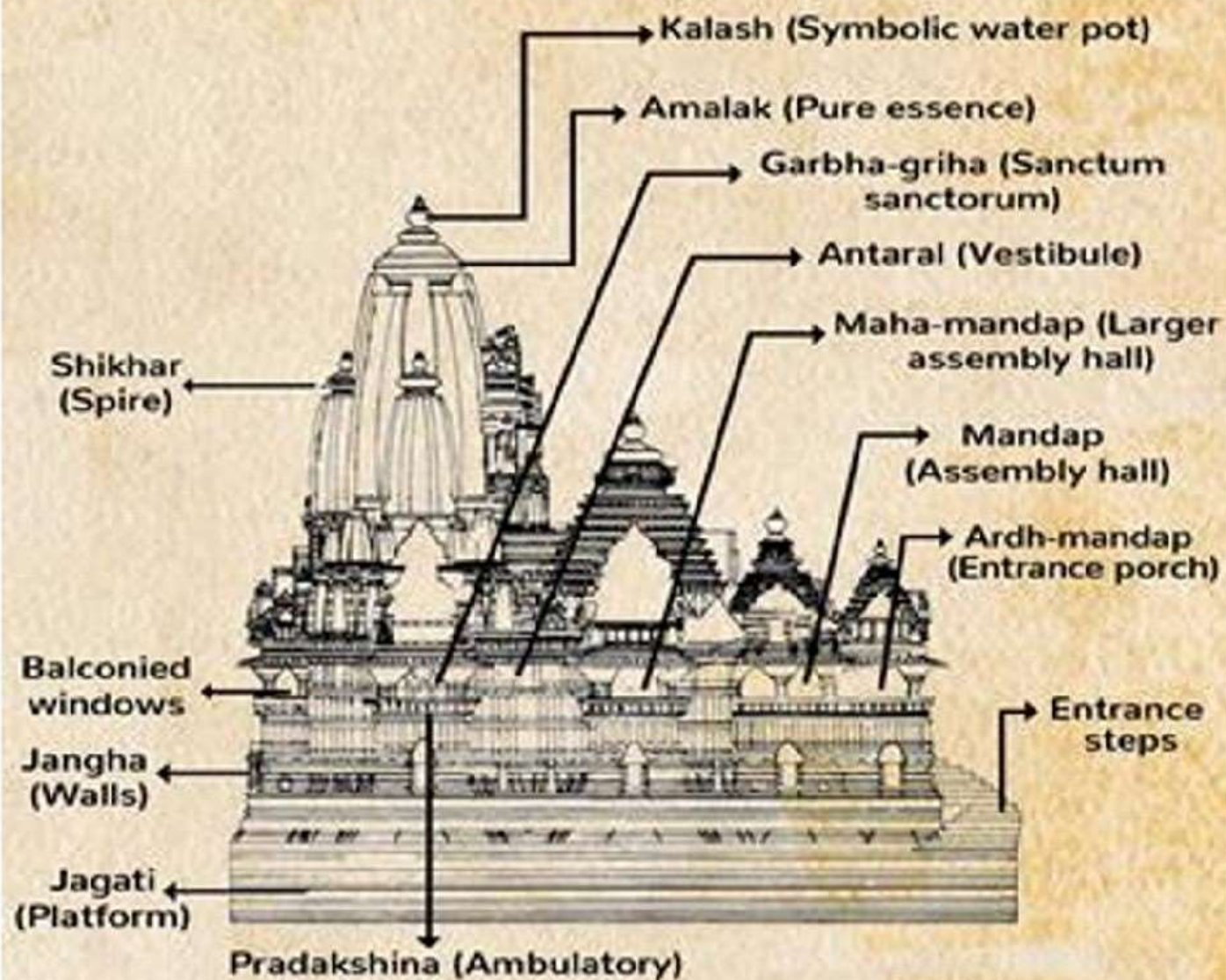
Five modes of Nagara architecture

Depending on the period and geography, there is a large variation when it comes to what a shikhara looks like, or how it is used in a temple's design.

On this basis, five modes of Nagara temple architecture, namely, Valabhi, Phamsana, Latina, Shekhari, and Bhumija.

The first two are associated with what scholars have classified as Early Nagara Style.

NAGARA STYLE OF TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE



Project BHISHM



BHISHM -Bharat **H** Health Initiative for **S**ahyog, **H**ita and **M**aitri).



It is a project that aims to provide immediate medical assistance during humanitarian crises or natural disasters.



It is a joint project of the *Indian Navy and the DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation).*



The project also includes the world's first indigenous portable hospital.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

BY BHUNESH SIR
(TILL NOV 23)

- ✓ UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE 1 YEAR CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE PDFS

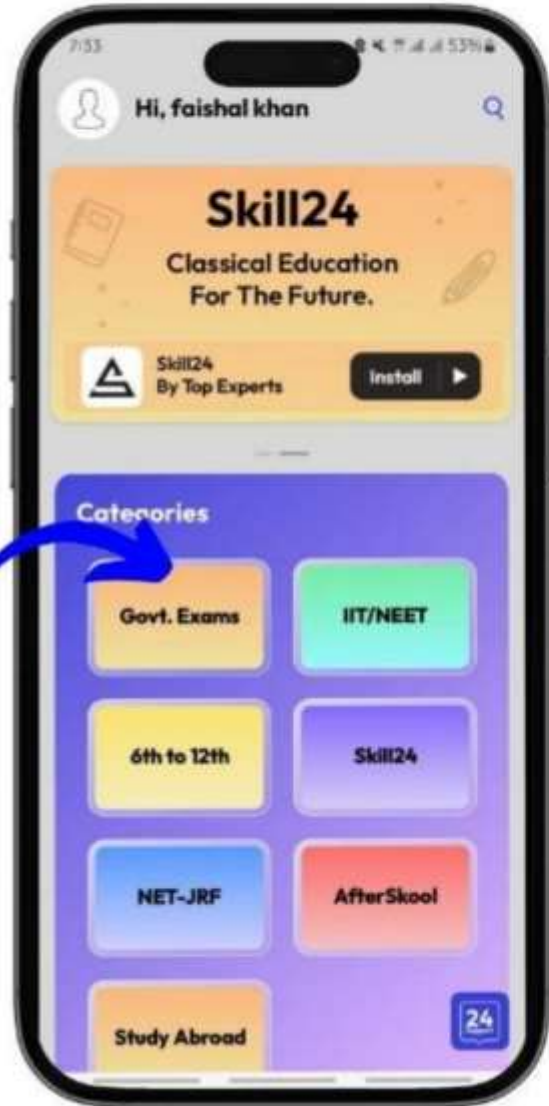
360° EXAM COVERED

USE CODE - B50



CLASS24

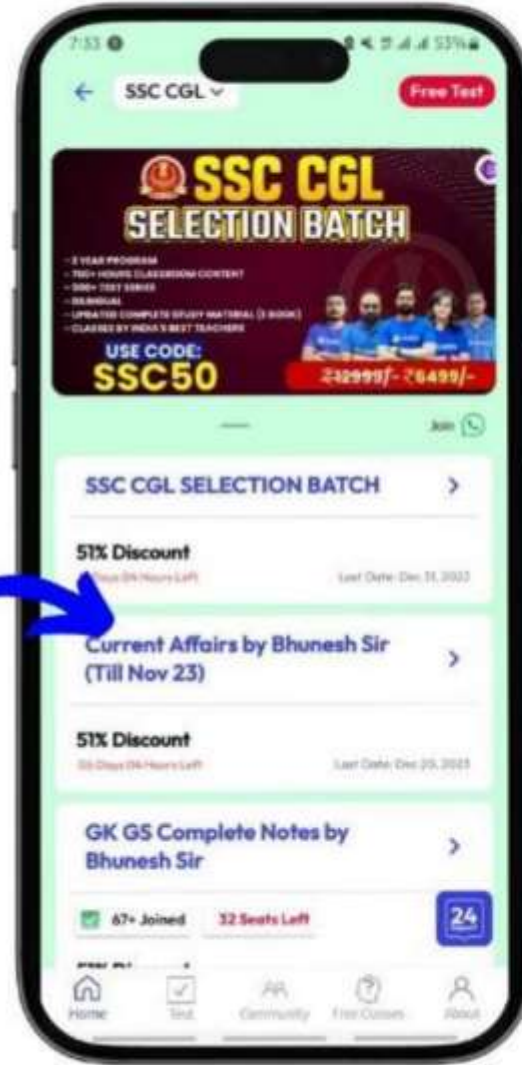
Step-1



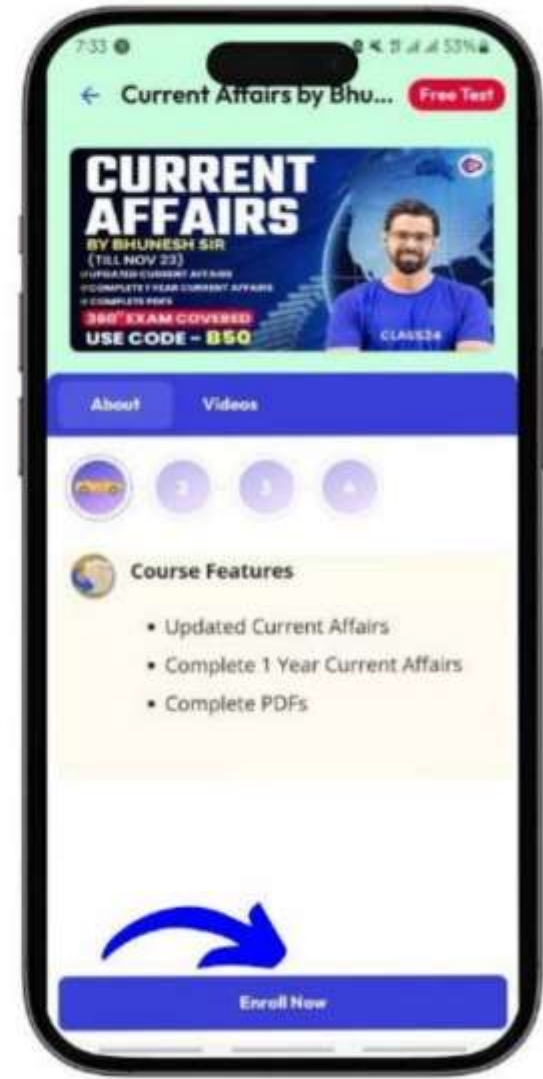
Step-2




Step-3



Step-4



A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, some in the foreground and some blurred in the background. The lighting is soft and focused on the clapping action. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner of the image.

Thank you
guys.
