

Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता



The Indian EXPRESS

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS



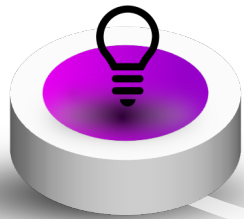
5
The Hindu



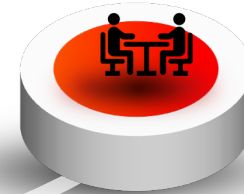
5
PIB, PR4 & Other newspaper



1
The Indian Express



0
Jansatta




1
Financial Express



Class24 App download


Class pdf


**10 Questions
test related to
this class**

CURRENT AFFAIRS



COMPLETE GK/GS COURSE

By Bhunesh Sir

- ✓ UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE 2 YEARS (2023 + 2024) CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE NOTES (PDF)
- ✓ 360° DEGREE EXAMS COVERED

~~₹1999/-~~ ₹799/-

OFFER DATE -
25th TO 26th March

USE CODE - **B60**



CLASS24

By Bhunesh Sir

- ✓ STATIC GK
- ✓ HISTORY
- ✓ POLITY
- ✓ GEOGRAPHY
- ✓ ECONOMICS
- ✓ SCIENCE

OFFER DATE -
25th TO 26th
March

~~₹1999/-~~ ₹799/-

USE CODE - **B60**



RPSC PROGRAMMER

FEATURES

- ✓ UPDATED SYLLABUS COVERAGE
- ✓ COMPLETE ROADMAP
- ✓ NOTES (PDF)
- ✓ LIVE + RECORDED
- ✓ DOUBT SESSION
- ✓ COMPLETE PYQS PRACTICE (NET & GATE)
- ✓ LIVE INTERACTIVE CLASSES

OFFER DATE:

25th - 26th MARCH

60% OFF

**USE CODE-
HOLI**

~~₹9999/-~~ **₹4000/-**

HAPPY

HOLI

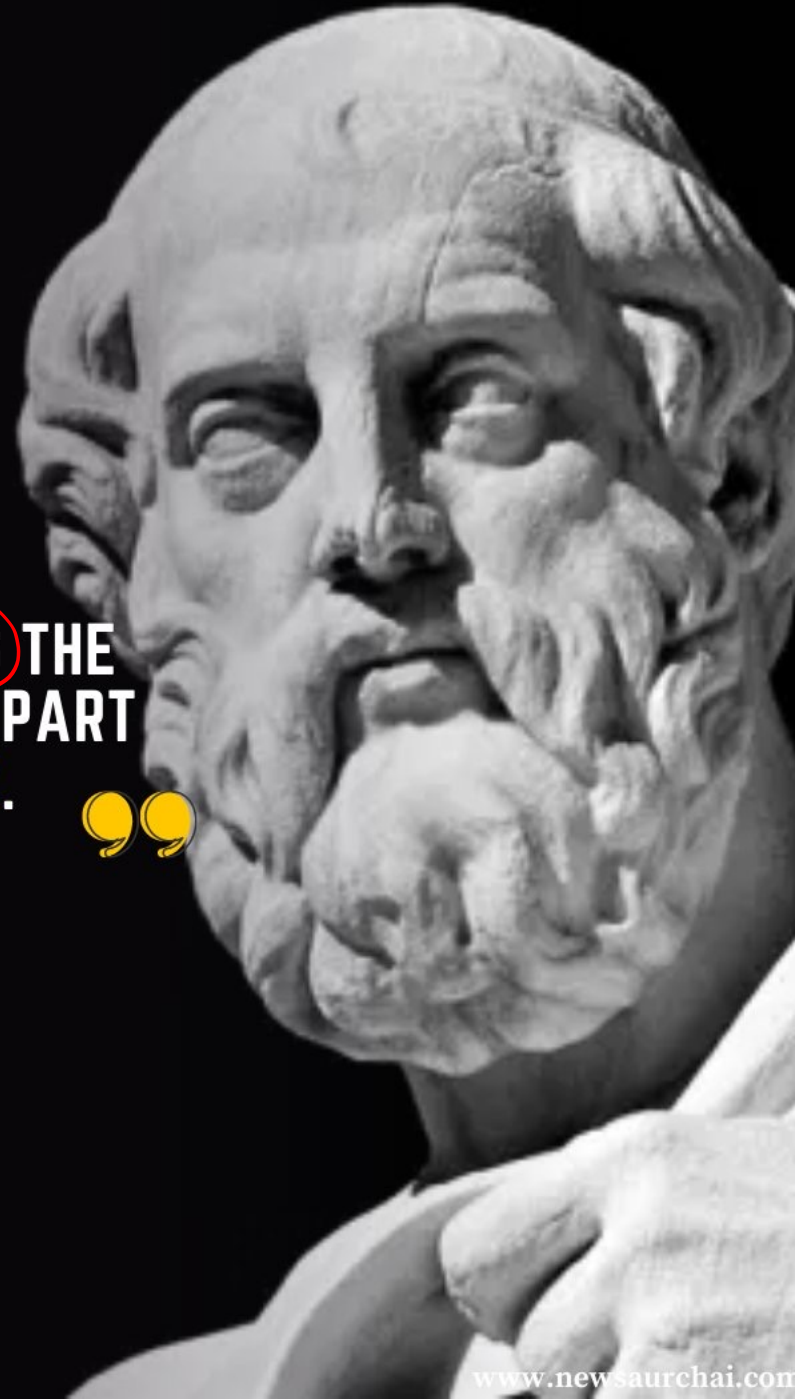




THE **BEGINNING** IS THE
MOST **IMPORTANT** PART
OF THE **WORK.**



PLATO



News | Corporate | Bangalore | Hyderabad | Madurai | Noida | Visakhapatnam | Thiruvananthapuram | Kochi | Vijayawada | Mangaluru | Tirunelveli | Kolkata | Guwahati | Mysuru | Madurai | Madurai | Madurai | Lucknow | Coimbatore | Pune

AYURVEDIC SKINCARE

Is this the year of A-beauty?

With big funding, a proliferation of homegrown and international brands, and growing global acceptance, the market is poised to hit \$21.1 billion in four years

MAGAZINE » PAGE 1

How bad is the humanitarian crisis in Gaza?

FAQ » PAGE 8

Mustafa Suleyman, the new face of Microsoft AI

PROFILES » PAGE 9

Curran powers Punjab Kings past Capitals

SPORT » PAGE 13

INSIDE

Cong. fields Ajay Rai to take on Modi in Varanasi

NEW DELHI
The Congress on Saturday announced 45 names in its fourth list of candidates for the Lok Sabha polls while one seat for the Rashtriya Loksewaki Party in Rajasthan, Congress chief Ajay Rai has been fielded from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's seat in Varanasi. » PAGE 4

Navy hands over 35 Somali pirates to police

NEW DELHI
The 35 pirates who were apprehended from pirate vessel *Rosen* during a 40-hour operation last week were brought to Mumbai and handed over to the police for prosecution, the Indian Navy said on Saturday. » PAGE 5

BJP made 'bribes' legal through electoral bonds, says Congress

Party accuses the BJP of using electoral bonds in four 'patterns of corruption', including 'prepaid, postpaid, and post-raid bribes'; it reiterates demand for an SC-monitored probe into the scheme; says INDIA will probe the 'scam' if voted to power

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Alleging that the bond scheme ensured that "prepaid, postpaid, and post-raid bribes" could be routed through regular banking channels, the Congress on Saturday reiterated its demand for Supreme Court-monitored investigation into the scheme.

Addressing a press conference at party headquarters, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said that an analysis of recently published State Bank of India (SBI) data has revealed that 38 corporate groups received 179 government contracts and worth ₹1.8 lakh crore after donating electoral bonds to the BJP. Using a Python code on the SBI data, the Congress matched donations with the political parties who received them in less than 15 seconds, he said. The Congress leader also shared the Python code at the press conference.

Grave charges

Here are the Congress' allegations over the links between electoral bonds donated to the BJP by corporates, and the awarding of government contracts and projects

- Thirty-eight corporate groups made donations to the BJP and received a combined total of 179 major government contracts and projects worth ₹1.8 lakh crore. In these groups, 22,004 crore was paid to the party.
- Forty-one corporates that received CVC/CIIT searches had given ₹2,592 crore to the BJP. Out of this, ₹1,853 crore was given after the raids.
- Sixteen shell companies donated ₹4.3 crore to the BJP.

They (the BJP) cannot support price a legal guarantee for farmers but have made bribes a legal affair

JAIRAM RAMESH
Congress general secretary

tee for farmers but have made bribes a legal affair," Mr. Ramesh said.

Corruption patterns
He identified four patterns of "blatant corruption" in the electoral bonds scheme: *Chanda Do, Dhand Lo* (Pay donation, get business); *Prepaid bribes*; *Thaka Lo, Rishwat Do* (Bribe contracts and pay bribes) or postpaid bribes; or post-raid bribes; and lastly, *Farzai companies*, or shell companies.

Under the "prepaid scheme", ₹531 crore was given to the BJP in donations; within three months, contracts and projects worth ₹1.32 lakh crore were given to the donors by the Union government and BJP-ruled State governments.

Under the "post-paid" category, he alleged that ₹62,005 crore worth of projects were given by the Centre or BJP State governments to 56 corporates within three months of approvals or contracts being signed, these firms paid ₹26 crore through electoral bonds.

However, the Congress did not reveal the names of the companies that were involved in these crore worth or which allegedly donated electoral bonds to the BJP. We are not blaming the companies but pointing out the system," the Congress leader said, trying to make the point that the Congress understands the importance of the private sector in raising India's GDP.

133 killed in Moscow concert hall shooting; 11 detained, says Putin



Tragic blaze: Smoke billows from the burning Crocus City Hall concert venue outside Moscow following a shooting incident on Friday. REUTERS

Associated Press
MOSCOW

A group of Afghanistans claimed responsibility for Friday's attack in a statement posted on affiliated channels on social media. A U.S. intelligence official said U.S. agencies had confirmed that the group was responsible for the attack.

Videos posted online showed gunmen in the venue shooting civilians at point-blank range.

The attack, which was the deadliest in Russia's years, came just days after Mr. Putin cemented his grip on power in an electoral landslide.

Images shared by Russian state media on Saturday showed a fleet of emergency vehicles still gathered outside the ruins of Crocus City Hall, which had a maximum capacity of more than 6,000 people. Russian news reports cited authorities and witnesses as saying the attackers threw explosive devices that started the fire.

KVIV DENIES ROLE » PAGE 11

AAP writes to CEC as police block office



AAP workers seen during a protest against arrest of Delhi CM, SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Alleging that the Delhi Police has blocked all routes to the Aam Aadmi Party's office in the national capital after the arrest of the party's national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the AAP wrote to Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar on Saturday seeking a meeting to present its urgent grievances.

Noting that the AAP's Matiala MLA Gulab Singh's premises were raided by the Income Tax department on Saturday, the party told the Election Commission (EC) that it continues to face "high-handed" behaviour from Central law enforcement agencies despite the Model Code of Conduct being in place.

"We fail to understand how a political party can fight elections under such repressive environment. We urge you to take corrective action immediately and direct all the agencies to observe restraint while the Model Code of Conduct is in effect," the AAP said in an email to the CEC.

RELATED REPORT » PAGE 3

Myriad hues for festival of colours in a non-toxic way

The eco-friendly colours were found to be a 100% safe; it was developed by a research group of Nagaland University's Department of Chemistry



Rahul Karanakar
GOVT

Experiments at a chemical laboratory in Nagaland have yielded a new range of non-toxic colours made from indigenous plants, offering Holi revelellers a safe alternative to the chemical-laced pigments.

The "benign" powdered hues, made from natural items such as mustard leaves, coriander, spinach, beetroot, mulberry, turmeric, rose, hibiscus, artot, and rhododendron, were developed by the research group at Nagaland University's Department of Chemistry.

The eco-friendly colours can have several applications beyond the festival, and could potentially fuel small-scale industries in the geographically challenged State, the group's

Herbal Holi colours made from indigenous plants

Herbal Holi colours made from indigenous plants

Herbal Holi colours made from indigenous plants

Herbal Holi colours made from indigenous plants

Herbal Holi colours made from indigenous plants

Herbal Holi colours made from indigenous plants

133 killed in Moscow concert hall shooting; 11 detained, says Putin

ISIS - K

(133) Deaths
Ukraine / Russia / opposition
Terror
X



Tragic blaze: Smoke billows from the burning Crocus City Hall concert venue outside Moscow following a shooting incident on Friday. REUTERS

Associated Press MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Saturday that authorities have detained 11 people in the attack on a suburban Moscow concert hall that killed at least 133 people.

In an address to the nation, Mr. Putin called it “a bloody, barbaric terrorist act” and said all four people who were directly involved had been taken into custody.

The Islamic State

group’s Afghanistan branch claimed responsibility for Friday’s attack in a statement posted on affiliated channels on social media. A U.S. intelligence official said U.S. agencies had confirmed that the group was responsible for the attack.

Videos posted online showed gunmen in the venue shooting civilians at point-blank range.

The attack, which was the deadliest in Russia in years, came just days after Mr. Putin cemented his

grip on power in an electoral landslide.

Images shared by Russian state media on Saturday showed a fleet of emergency vehicles still gathered outside the ruins of Crocus City Hall, which had a maximum capacity of more than 6,000 people. Russian news reports cited authorities and witnesses as saying the attackers threw explosive devices that started the fire.

KYIV DENIES ROLE
» PAGE 11

ISIS-K, the breakaway faction of Pak Taliban that claimed responsibility for Moscow attack

ERIC SCHMITT
MARCH 23

THE GROUP that claimed credit for the terrorist attack in Moscow Friday is the Islamic State affiliate in Afghanistan called Islamic State Khorasan Province, or ISIS-K.

ISIS-K was founded in 2015 by disaffected members of the Pakistani Taliban, who then embraced a more violent version of Islam. The group saw its ranks cut roughly in half, to about 1,500 to 2,000 fighters, by 2021 from a combination of U.S. airstrikes and Afghan commando raids that killed many of its leaders.

The group got a dramatic second wind soon after the Taliban toppled the Afghan government

that year. During the U.S. military withdrawal from the country, ISIS-K carried out a suicide bombing at the international airport in Kabul in August 2021 that killed 13 U.S. troops and as many as 170 civilians. The attack raised ISIS-K's international profile, positioning it as a major threat to the Taliban's ability to govern. Since then, the Taliban have been fighting pitched battles against ISIS-K in Afghanistan. So far, the Taliban's security services have prevented the group from seizing territory or recruiting large numbers of former Taliban fighters.

US President Joe Biden and his top commanders have said the US would carry out "over-the-hori-

zon" strikes from a base in the Persian Gulf against ISIS and Qaida insurgents who threaten the US and its interests overseas. Indeed, Gen. Michael Kurilla, the head of the military's Central Command, told a House committee that ISIS-K "retains the capability and the will to attack US and Western interests abroad in as little as six months with little to no warning."

Counterterrorism officials in Europe say that in recent months, they have snuffed out several nascent ISIS-K plots to attack.

In a post on its official Telegram account in January, ISIS-K said it was behind a bombing attack that killed 84 people in Kerman, Iran, during a memorial

procession for Gen. Qassem Soleimani, a revered Iranian commander who was killed in a US drone strike in 2020. ISIS-K, which has threatened Iran over what it says is its polytheism and apostasy, has claimed responsibility for several attacks there.

'Russia a target'

"ISIS-K has been fixated on Russia for the past two years" and frequently criticises President Vladimir Putin in its propaganda, said Colin Clarke, a counterterrorism analyst at the Soufan Group, a security consulting firm based in New York. "ISIS-K accuses the Kremlin of having Muslim blood in its hands, referencing Moscow's interventions in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Syria." **NYT**



Taliban-Pak

Conf

ISIS

Taliban

IN BRIEF

6 killed, 1 injured in chemical factory fire near Jaipur

Six people died and one person was injured in a fire that broke out at a chemical factory near Jaipur on Saturday, officials said. Jaipur District Collector Prakash Rajpurohit said the fire started late in the evening after an explosion in the boiler of the factory in the district's Bassi area. One of the two injured, who was admitted to Jaipur's Sawal Man Singh government hospital with 95 per cent burn injuries, died during treatment, hospital superintendent Dr. Achal Sharma said. The other injured person suffered 65 per cent burn injuries and is undergoing treatment. Jaipur Commissioner of Police Biju George Joseph said five people died on the spot. The fire has been doused. Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel Sharma condoned the deaths and directed officials to provide assistance to the affected.

ED seizes ₹40 lakh cash from Bengal Minister's residence

The Enforcement Directorate on Saturday seized over ₹40 lakh in cash from the residence of West Bengal Minister Chandranath Sinha in Birbhum district. The seizures were made after a 14-hour-long raid at the Minister's residence in which several property-related documents and a mobile phone were seized. The raid was held in connection with the West Bengal school recruitment scam in which former Education Minister Partha Chatterjee was arrested. The search started on Friday and continued till late on Saturday. The agency said Mr. Sinha could not clarify why the cash was kept at his residence.

Army cancels UCC seminar in J&K over poll code violation

The Army on Saturday cancelled a scheduled seminar on Uniform Civil Code (UCC) at the Kashmir University campus in Srinagar, hours after the National Conference sought the attention of the Election Commission and criticised the move as a violation ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha election. The Army's seminar, titled 'Navigating Legal Frontiers: Understanding Indian Penal Code 2023 and the Quest for Uniform Civil Code', was scheduled for March 26 at the university. An invitation for the event was extended by Major General P.B.S. Lamba, General Officer Commanding headquarters 31 Sub Area.

Centre issues advisory on preventing hospital fires

As temperatures escalate, the Union Health Ministry and NDMA on Saturday issued a joint advisory to States on measures to prevent hospital fires during summer months. The Ministry has directed States/UTs to ensure that all accredited hospitals within their jurisdiction conduct thorough inspections, address discrepancy in electrical load capacity and obtain valid fire NOCs from respective State fire departments. States/UTs have also been urged to conduct follow-up reviews to ensure implementation of critical safety measures.

SUDOKU

7 4 5
3 9 4 1 2
9 3
2 1 4 7
3 3 1 8
8 3 6 5
9 9 6
DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆
Solution to yesterday's Sudoku
8 4 6 2 7 3 9 1 5
1 5 2 7 9 6 3 8 4
3 9 4 1 2 8 5 6 7
2 1 8 9 4 5 7 3 6
7 6 5 1 3 2 8 4 9
4 8 3 6 5 7 1 9 2
6 8 3 4 5 2 7 1 9
5 7 1 4 2 6 8 3
9 2 4 3 8 1 6 5 7

Navy steps up vigil amid piracy threat

35 pirates brought to land from the high seas have been handed over to the Mumbai police; crew of MV Ruen reinstated and the ship has hoisted the flag of Malta; 'Operation Sankalp' in the Gulf of Aden, which involved over 5,000 personnel, 21 ships, and 900 hours of flying, completes 100 days

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The 35 pirates who were apprehended from pirate vessel *Ruen* during a 40-hour operation last week were brought to Mumbai and handed over to the police for prosecution, the Indian Navy said on Saturday. It also announced that the Navy's maritime security operations under the slogan of 'Operation Sankalp' in the Gulf of Aden have completed 100 days.

"If there is disorder at sea caused by pirates, Houthi or whoever, trade gets disrupted. Then it has to remain all around Africa through the Cape of Good Hope and the insurance rates will go up. Finally, who will pay that cost? You pool me, the rest of the common man. Therefore, our effort is to ensure that the trade continues safely and we get what we want at the price we are supposed to get and not at a higher price," Chief of Naval Staff Admiral K. Aditya Kumar said addressing a press conference. "We are the largest resident naval power in the Indian Ocean." The ocean is named after India



Brought to book! The 35 apprehended pirates were debarked from *INS Kolkata* in Mumbai on Saturday and handed over to local police for further legal action as per Indian laws. EMMANUEL YODINI

and think it is *Bharti Nau-sena* (Indian Navy) responsible to originate the container costs have gone up by almost 35% to 40% and the cost of insurance has gone up from \$500 to \$2,000 plus", he said. An almost 40% to 50% of the companies have started re-routing their ships around the Cape of Good Hope. During the 100 days of 'Operation Sankalp', the Indian Navy has responded in many ways and some notifications have already been issued by agencies

IOR, said Commodore Sandeep Randhawa, from Naval Operations, while briefing the media on the operation. "The arduous efforts of the Navy since December involved deployment of over 5,000 personnel at sea, over 450 ships deployed and 900 hours of flying by the maritime surveillance aircraft to address threats in the maritime domain," he said. In a 40-hour operation,

destroyer *INS Kolkata* in the morning of March 15 forced the surrender of 35 pirates and freed 17 crew members of the vessel. An Indian Air Force (IAF) C-17 transport aircraft and essential repairs were undertaken by naval technicians for making the ship fit for further voyage, the Navy said. "On request from the ship's original company, Navibulgar, and its master, the crew of *MV Ruen* were reinstated on board the ship, which received a similar status as it hoisted the flag of Malta," the Navy spokesperson said.

Admiral Kumar also drew attention to the cost asymmetry between the attacker and the defender. "For example, you make a drone for ₹10-20 lakh and to defend it and shoot it down, the missile will cost ₹5-10 crore," he said.

MV Ruen has now proceeded to the next port of Salalah (Oman), as decided by the company, under escort of *INS Subhadra* to sa-

feared it against further pirate attack, the Navy added. To questions on the origin of the mines and ballistic missiles being fired by the Houthi rebels targeting commercial shipping, the Navy Chief said it was not known if they were being assisted by another country. He said the distance could be assembled from commercially available coastal. "One of the drones that we recovered from one of the merchant ships had the capability to travel 1,600 kilometres and it was made of plywood and other basic material. It had a four-stroke moped engine, very basic, elementary electronics, PCB (printed circuit board) technology. So it is not a very complicated thing and it's made from locally available materials," he said. He further stated that Houthis have also been firing missiles but their origin is not known.

Admiral Kumar also drew attention to the cost asymmetry between the attacker and the defender. "For example, you make a drone for ₹10-20 lakh and to defend it and shoot it down, the missile will cost ₹5-10 crore," he said.

IMA flags 'brain drain' of specialists to Britain's NHS

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has expressed its displeasure over what it calls as the "cherry-picking" of physicians from India to fill the gaps in the National Health Service (NHS) of the United Kingdom, without offering anything substantial in return to the medical fraternity here.

The IMA called it brain drain and noted that India too needs its specialists and those in real need of employment and better career prospects are actually the MBBS graduates.

"The opening we want is for our MBBS graduates. The NHS has got gaps and we are ready to help them. They help us IMA, national president R.V. Asokan told *The Hindu* on Saturday.

The IMA is actively looking at setting up a portal for providing training opportunities to young doctors, he added.

Toll rises to 20 in hooch tragedy in Punjab; AAP govt. comes under fire

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

With the death toll due to alleged consumption of spurious liquor in Punjab's Sangur district climbing to 20, the Election Commission (EC) on Saturday sought an immediate report from the Bhagwant Mann-led government into the tragedy, even as the State government faced a severe criticism from Opposition parties.

The Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab has sought an immediate preliminary report and a detailed report from the State's Chief Secretary and Director-General of Police (DGP). An official statement said that, according to information from the Commission, around 20 persons had died and 20 people were receiving treatment in various hospitals in Sangur and Patiala districts. Shiromani Akali Dal



The police recovered a huge quantity of spurious liquor, and equipment used in its manufacture and labelling. PTI

(SAD) chief spokesperson Arshdeep Singh Kler demanded a criminal case be registered against Excise Minister Harpal Cheema in the matter. "Mr. Bhagwant Mann was on record as having said at the time of the 2020 Tarn Taran hooch tragedy that the Punjab Police should resign immediately and that a murder case should be registered against the perpetrators," he said. "The Chief Minister has not found the time

Activists write to PM highlighting shortage of vital anti-TB drugs

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of World Tuberculosis Day, which is annually observed on March 24, activists, public health experts, TB survivors, and people living with HIV sought his urgent intervention to halt what they said were frequent shortages of anti-TB drugs.

The letter highlighted the shortage of drugs essential for treating drug-resistant TB (DR-TB). "As a country with the highest burden of tuberculosis in the world, we are deeply disturbed that India is experiencing stockouts of critically required drugs to treat people with TB," the group said.

"Till February 2024, [these] drugs 4FDC-list line DST-3c (Adufo Isoniazid, Rifampicin, Pyrazinamide, and Ethambutol), DST-3c (Adufo Isoniazid, Rifampicin, and Ethambutol) — are

facing shortages. This is as per the limited information received from the community/TB people in the affected areas and records. No shortage of actual shortages and stockouts have occurred," they added. The National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) acknowledges that an uninterrupted supply of quality assured anti-TB drugs is an essential component of its DOTS-based strategy, the group said, pointing out that an inadequate and poorly administered treatment regimen facilitates drug-resistant strains of the disease.

"The most severe impact of these persistent stockouts of anti-TB drugs is on people currently undergoing treatment. In this situation of treatment interruption, there is a very high risk of developing resistance. This also affects the health of people who are on the TB programme.

Pak. using terror as part of statecraft, says Jaishankar

Press Trust of India
SINGAPORE

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Saturday asserted that the mood in India now is to overlook the terrorism emanating from Pakistan which uses it as an instrument of statecraft and where terrorists are being sponsored at an "in-dubious level".

Mr. Jaishankar, who is on a three-day visit to Singapore, made these remarks during a Q&A round table post his lecture session on his book *Why Bharat Matters* at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) of National University of Singapore (NUS). "Every country wants a stable neighbourhood. If nothing else, you want at least a quiet neighbour-



In homage: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar pays tribute to a memorial of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in Singapore. PTI

hood," he said in response to a question on India's ties with Pakistan. "We have come to conclude it is that we have to be more addressing [the menace], that dodging the problem gets you dead with a neighbour who does not hide the fact that they use terrorism as an instrument of statecraft." "It's not a one-off happening...but very sustained, almost at an industry level...So, what we have to do is to be more addressing [the menace], that dodging the problem gets you dead with a neighbour who does not hide the fact that they use terrorism as an instrument of statecraft." "It's not a one-off

Election time in Bengal now not that different from 70s'

Bishwamath Ghosh
KOLKATA

Eminent Bengali writer Amar Mitra, who recently lost to the 1970s due to a literary achievement, said that the political atmosphere that West Bengal sees during elections has changed very little when compared with those days. According to him, while that period commonly witnessed rigging, it also featured some good leaders and great speakers, whereas today there is hardly any politician in Bengal whose speech one would listen to with interest. "Present-day election atmosphere is not good. I am not here, it only invites me to election speeches, which are not listened to. When you had leaders like Hiren Mukherjee or



Amar Mitra

Indira Gandhi or Indrajit Ghose, these days, leaders throw dirty language at each other, something completely unbecoming. Most leaders do not even have the courtesy to address their countrymen," said Mr. Mitra, 72, a recipient of several awards including the O. Henry Award and Sahitya Akademi Award. Mr. Mitra received the 1919 Nobel O. Henry

Award, whose past winners include William Faulkner, Saul Bellow, and Raymond Carver, exactly two years ago, but the more important news was that he was given the coveted award for a Bengali story published in 1977. Mr. Mitra wrote *Gaonbaro* (later titled *The Old Man of Kusumpur* in English) when he was 26, drawing from his experiences as an employee of West Bengal's Land Revenue Department. The story is about a man's journey to a remote village to meet a fictitious figure who is supposed to have the answers to every man's problems; as he makes the arduous journey, people he encounters along the way tell him their own problems, asking him to present their case to the old man.

Navy steps up vigil amid piracy threat

35 pirates brought to land from the high seas have been handed over to the Mumbai police; crew of *MV Ruen* reinstated and the ship has hoisted the flag of Malta; 'Operation Sankalp' in the Gulf of Aden, which involved over 5,000 personnel, 21 ships, and 900 hours of flying, completes 100 days

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The 35 pirates who were apprehended from pirate vessel *Ruen* during a 40-hour operation last week were brought to Mumbai and handed over to the police for prosecution, the Indian Navy said on Saturday. It also announced that the Navy's maritime security operations under the aegis of 'Operation Sankalp' in the Gulf of Aden have completed 100 days.

"If there is disorder at sea caused by pirates, Houthis or whoever, trade gets disrupted. Then it has to come all around Africa through the Cape of Good Hope and the insurance rates will go up. Finally, who will pay that cost? You and me, the citizens, the common man. Therefore, our effort is to ensure that our trade continues safely and we get what we want at the price we are supposed to get and not at a higher price," Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R. Hari Kumar said addressing a press conference. "We are the largest resident naval power in the Indian Ocean. The ocean is named after India



Brought to book: The 35 apprehended pirates were debarked from *INS Kolkata* in Mumbai on Saturday and handed over to local police for further legal action as per Indian laws. EMMANUAL YOGINI

and I think it is *Bharti Nau-sena's* [Indian Navy] responsibility to ensure that Indian Ocean Region [IOR] remains safe, secure, and stable. We will ensure that it is free, open, inclusive and a rules-based order is maintained."

On the impact of the Red Sea crisis, Admiral Kumar said the High Risk Area (HRA) is already back in many ways and some notifications have already been issued by agencies

from London. The insurance rates have gone up "by almost 35% to 40% and container costs have gone up from \$500 to \$2,000-plus", he said and almost 40% to 50% of the companies have started re-routing their ships around the Cape of Good Hope.

During the 100 days of 'Operation Sankalp', the Indian Navy has responded to 18 incidents and has played a pivotal role as the "First Responder" in the

IOR, said Commodore Sundep Randhawa, from Naval Operations, while briefing the media on the operation. "The arduous efforts of the Navy since December involved deployment of over 5,000 personnel at sea, over 450 ship days [with over 21 ships deployed] and 900 hours of flying by the maritime surveillance aircraft to address threats in the maritime domain," he said.

In a 40-hour operation,

destroyer *INS Kolkata* intercepted merchant vessel turned pirate vessel *Ruen* in the morning of March 15 and forced the surrender of 35 pirates and freed 17 crew members of the vessel. An Indian Air Force (IAF) C-17 transport aircraft airdropped marine commandos and combat boats as part of the mission, which was executed 2,600 km away from the Indian coast.

Ship sanitised

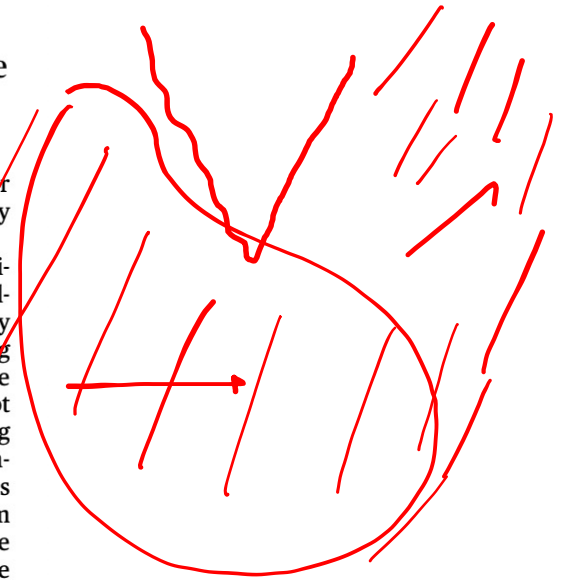
After the seizure of *Ruen*, Indian Navy specialists searched and sanitised the ship and in addition, an assessment of seaworthiness and essential repairs were undertaken by naval technical team for making the ship fit for further voyage, the Navy said. "On request from the ship's original company, Navibulgar, and the master, the crew of *MV Ruen* were reinstated on board the ship, which reverted to earlier status and hoisted the flag of Malta," the Navy spokesperson said.

MV Ruen has now proceeded to the next port of Salalah (Oman), as decided by the company, under escort of *INS Subhadra* to sa-

eguard it against further pirate attack, the Navy added.

To questions on the origin of the drones and ballistic missiles being fired by the Houthi rebels targeting commercial shipping, the Navy Chief said it was not known if they were being assisted by another country. He said the drones could be assembled from commercially available materials. "One of the drones that we recovered from one of the merchant ships had the capability to travel 1,600 kilometres and it was made of plywood and other basic material. It had a four-stroke moped engine, very basic, elementary electronics, PCB [printer circuit board] on board. So it is not a very complicated thing and it's made probably even locally." He further stated that Houthis have also been firing missiles but their origin is not known.

Admiral Kumar also drew attention to the cost asymmetry between the attacker and the defender. "For example, you make a drone for ₹10-20 lakh and to defend it and shoot it down, the missile will cost ₹5-10 crore," he said.



SLIMHIDE Swachata Badhao, Tandrusti Badhe
Slim Hide Flush Tank Kahan...?
 Badi Todfod + Deewaar Ko Leakage Se Bachayen **Space Saving**

After incentive for Tests, BCCI working out fee hike for Ranji players

DEVENDRA PANDEY
 MUMBAI, MARCH 23

WEEKS AFTER it decided to increase the payments to Test cricketers, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is working out a similar remuneration plan for the Ranji Trophy, the country's premier domestic red-ball tournament, it is learnt.

This comes as the BCCI scrambles to cap the trend of players picking the cash-rich Indian Premier League (IPL) over domestic cricket.

After the Test Cricket Incentive Scheme, the BCCI is working out how to reward players who play red-ball Ranji Trophy cricket. The BCCI is planning to increase the match fees to give more importance to red-ball cricket, a BCCI official told *The Indian Express*.

Under the Test Cricket Incentive Scheme, announced by the BCCI earlier in March, players will now get up to Rs 40 lakh incentive per Test match in addition to the Rs 15-lakh match fee.

For Ranji, the BCCI currently pays between Rs 40,000 and Rs 60,000 per day as match fee, depending on the number of games a cricketer has played across seasons. For instance, a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



HIMACHAL PRADESH

The Cong rebels with Union Minister Anurag Thakur and BJP leaders Jai Ram Thakur and Arun Singh in Delhi. *Praveen Khanna*

After cross-voting in RS elections, 6 Cong MLAs, 3 Independents join BJP

VIKAS PATHAK & MANOJ G
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

IN A boost for the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, six disqualified Congress MLAs and three Independent MLAs from Himachal Pradesh, who had cross-voted in the Rajya Sabha elections last month, joined the party in New Delhi on Saturday.

The BJP's decision to induct

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

ATRI MITRA & RAVIK BHATTACHARYA
 KOLKATA, MARCH 23

QUITE LIKE Assam's Barak Valley where its Bengali-speaking Hindus who have migrated from Bangladesh are not rushing to register under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, in the Matua community in West Bengal, the initial euphoria over the implementation of the legislation has



CONCERT HALL ATTACK TOLL 133, ALL 4 GUNMEN HELD; UKRAINE REBUTS RUSSIA CHARGE

Moscow massacre: ISIS-K claims it did it, Russia pursues Ukraine 'link'

GUY FAULCONBRIDGE, ALEXANDER MARROW & MARK TREVEL YAN
 MOSCOW, LONDON, MARCH 23

RUSSIA SAID Saturday it had arrested all four gunmen suspected of carrying out a shooting massacre in a concert hall near Moscow — the deadliest terror attack in a decade — as

President Vladimir Putin pledged to track down and punish those guilty.

Militant Islamist group Islamic State claimed responsibility for Friday's rampage but there were indications that Russia was pursuing a Ukrainian link, despite cryptic denials from Ukrainian officials that they had anything to do with it.

The four suspected gunmen are all foreign citizens, Russia's Interior Ministry said. The state Investigative Committee said 133 people had been killed and more than 120 were wounded. State TV editor Margarita Simonyan, without citing a source, had earlier given a toll of 143.

In a televised address, Putin said 11 people had been detained, including the four gunmen. They

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

PREMIER B-SCHOOLS SAY THEY ARE WORKING ON DIVERSITY

Changing IIM: Over 2 decades, more women; engineers still dominate but their share dips

Share of women doubles in 5 of the old IIMs; at Ahmedabad, a third of 22-24 batch non-engineers, was 5% a decade ago

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW AN EXPRESS RTI APPLICATION

RTU SHARMA
 AHMEDABAD, NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

TRADITIONALLY DOMINATED by men and engineering graduates, classrooms of the country's premier business schools, the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), are changing with a sharp increase in women students and a steady decline in the share of engineers over the last two decades.

From 13% of the intake 20

INCREASING GENDER DIVERSITY AT IIMs

IIM	2019		2022	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
IIM-Ahmedabad	89%	11%	77%	23%
IIM-Bangalore	83%	17%	70%	30%
IIM-Calcutta	89%	11%	71%	29%
IIM-Kozhikode	95%	5%	50%	50%
IIM-Indore	83%	17%	67%	33%

Source: RTI (IM-E witnessed drop in women students from 36% in 2012 to 30% in 2022)

years ago, women students now make up almost a third (31%) of the students at the first-generation IIMs. Also, while students from engineering backgrounds still dominate these schools, they are down from 90% a decade ago to 66% now.

The *Indian Express* analysed admission data, obtained under the Right to Information Act, of the flagship two-year postgraduate programme (PGP) at the six

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

DAY AFTER ED GETS CUSTODY UNTIL MARCH 28

Will be back soon... don't hate BJP for this: Wife reads Kejrival message

Delhi CM moves HC against arrest: no one has sympathy for him, says BJP

Berlin flags due process, Delhi protests: 'Do not interfere'

SHUBHAJIT ROY
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

GERMANY HAS "taken note" of the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and hopes that the standards relating to independence of judiciary and basic democratic principles will be applied.

Responding to this, India summoned German ambassador to Delhi on Saturday and lodged a strong protest against the German Foreign Ministry's remarks on Kejriwal's arrest.

This is the third face-off between the German Foreign Ministry and the MEA in the last

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



D Raja and other CPI leaders with Arvind Kejriwal's wife, Sunita Kejriwal, and daughter Harshita. N/Commads@Iqga **REPORTS, P 4**

JATIN ANAND ANONNA DUTT
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

SEEKING BLESSINGS for her husband and asking the people to defeat powers that are "weakening Bharat", Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita was public to convey the Aam

Aamdi Party (AAP) chief's "message from prison" in a video Saturday, challenging his arrest as "illegal". According to sources, the arrest is unlikely to be heard before March 27, when the HC

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

WHAT ELECTORAL BOND DATA, ED REMAND REVEAL

Aurobindo donated to BRS, TDP, BJP pre-director's arrest; only to BJP after

KALNAIN SHERIFF M & ANONNA DUTT
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 23

ASCRIBING OF the Enforcement Directorate's remand application seeking custody of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal juxtaposed with bond purchases by Aurobindo Pharma reveals: 1) purchases made before the arrest of the company's director by the ED were encashed by multiple political parties — BRS, TDP and BJP and 2) purchases made after his arrest, statement to ED, and turning an approver, were

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BONDS PHARMA FIRM BOUGHT, AND WHEN

Date	Party	Amount
APRIL 2021 - OCTOBER 2022	Aurobindo Pharma purchases bonds worth ₹22 crore; BRS encashes ₹15 crore, BJP ₹4.5 crore, TDP ₹2.5 crore	₹22 crore
NOVEMBER 10, 2022	P.Sarathi, Chandra Reddy, Aurobindo's non-executive director, arrested by ED in excise policy case	-
NOVEMBER 15, 2022	Aurobindo purchases electoral bonds worth ₹25 crore	₹25 crore
NOVEMBER 21, 2022	BJP encashes Aurobindo bonds	₹25 crore

'Cash-for-query' case: CBI searches premises linked to Mahua Moitra

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL & SWEETY KUMARI
 NEW DELHI, KOLKATA, MARCH 23

DAYS AFTER it registered an FIR against former Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, the CBI on Saturday conducted searches at multiple premises linked to her, across different locations in West Bengal, in connection with the alleged cash-for-query case. Sources said the CBI teams were accompanied by cyber security experts.

The CBI registered an FIR on Thursday, two days after the

CAA: Initial euphoria fades, Matua leaders tell community not to apply yet

After this, the NRC (National Register of Citizens) will be implemented, and these people will be sent to detention camps. The message has hit home, among people who are used to promises dying up. "I came to India in February 2004 and my mother came two months later. Now I have been making frantic calls to Bangladesh, where her sisters live, to get documents proving that she once lived there. They do not have them," says Sujan Haldar (32), a resident of Barisal province in Bangladesh. Haldar adds: "My family and I will not apply right now... there are a lot of unanswered questions. We bought land in 2004 and built a house here in 2005. That was on the basis of the voter card and other documents we made here. Once we apply (under the CAA), will the land deed be valid? Will my graduation certificate be?"

A 43-year-old state government employee who came to India from Faridpur province in Bangladesh in 2001 says: "Have you heard of Sinder Chor? These Bangladeshi dig a hole through the mud floor of a village house, and first push through an earthen,

given way to apprehension. Now, Matua community leaders have issued statements asking their members to wait till the elections are over, and the confusion over the papers to be submitted is sorted. BJP leaders have reached out to Delhi saying that a clause in the rules seeking proof of residence in neighbouring Bangladesh, Afghanistan or Pakistan be done away with. And many Matua families are making frantic calls to relatives back in Bangladesh in desperate search for the papers they might need.

Having passed the CAA in 2019, the Narendra Modi government notified the rules only on March 11, days after the announcement of the Lok Sabha poll schedule.

What the BJP hoping to cash in on the Matua vote in Bengal, which is among the high-priority states for the BJP. Trinamool Congress supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was among the first to caution the Matuas not to apply under the CAA.

"I will be happy if anyone gets citizenship, but the BJP is fooling people," she said. "The moment one applies for citizenship, they will be identified as intruders.



Matua members celebrate after the Centre notified the CAA rules on March 11, in North 24 Parganas district. File

Lokpal ordered a formal investigation in the case and told its agency to submit a copy of its report within three months. "The CBI came home & to an election office today. Were we polite. Searched. Found nothing. Mohua got on 'X' at night. Moitra has been accused c

CONTINUED ON PAGE:

black, round pot. If the pot is not detected, then they slip it. This is our condition too. We are waiting for others to apply as well what happens."

On Tuesday, the Matu Mahasangha, the largest organisation of the community in Bengal, said the CAA has notified recently need rectification and that community member who want to apply under the CAA should wait till the formation of new government in Bangladesh in 2021 says: "Matu Mahasangha general secretary Mahabir Das told *The Indian Express*: "Som

CONTINUED ON PAGE:

● INDIA SUPPORTS BHUTAN IN HEALTHCARE

Modi unveils India-funded hospital

150-bed hospital built at a cost of ₹141crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Thimphu, March 23

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi and his Bhutanese counterpart Tshering Tobgay on Saturday inaugurated a hospital built with Indian assistance which will offer quality healthcare for women and children and be a shining example of India-Bhutan development cooperation. The Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuk Mother and Child Hospital is a state-of-the-art 150-bedded facility that has been built with the assistance of



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bhutanese counterpart Tshering Tobgay at the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital in Thimphu

PTI

the Government of India in Thimphu. “Inaugurated the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck Mother and Child

Hospital, which stands as a beacon of hope for several families, offering quality healthcare,” Modi posted on X.

He said the new facility embodies a commitment to nurturing a healthy future generation. “A boost to partnership in healthcare. PM @narendramodi together with PM @tsheringtobgay of Bhutan inaugurated the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital in Thimphu.

The state-of-the-art hospital is a shining example of India-Bhutan development cooperation,” external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a post on X. India has supported the development of the hospital in two phases. The first phase was constructed at a cost of ₹22 crore and has been operational since 2019. The construction of the second phase was taken up in 2019, as part of the 12th Five Year Plan at a cost of

₹119 crore, and was completed recently, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a press release. It said that the newly constructed hospital would add value to the quality of mother and child health services in Bhutan. The new facility will house state-of-the-art facilities for Pediatrics, Gynaecology and Obstetrics, Anesthesiology, Operation Theatre, Neonatal Intensive Care and Pediatric Intensive Care.

“The Hospital stands as a shining example of India-Bhutan partnership in health care,” it added. “Bhutan has been receiving a lot of support from India, especially in the health sector, starting from the three referral hospitals and also other health facilities,” Bhutan health minister Tandin Wangchuk told PTI.

२५१

Article with title: **INDIA bloc to hold rally on March 31**

concerned over lack of donors' data

person-centred solutions
There must be a paradigm shift

Samson's knock sets up RR's winning start

AT PROTEST RALLY
CAA is part of RSS agenda: Kerala CM
STATES | PAGE 3

RUSSIA ATTACKS UKRAINE
Breach in airspace sees Poland scrambling jets
WORLD | PAGE 14

LEADING THE WAY
Samson's knock sets up RR's winning start
SPORT | PAGE 16

INSIDE



JDU releases list of 16 candidates, drops two MPs

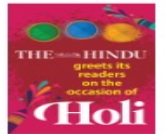
The JDU (led by Nitya Rai) on Sunday released a list of 16 candidates for the coming polls, and provided a caste break-up, in a reflection of the impact the caste census had on the State's politics. Two MPs have been dropped, while two newcomers have been included. » PAGE 5

Left candidates trounce ABVP in JNU union polls

NEW DELHI In limited left panel, comprising of AISA, SPJ, DSA, and ABVP, the left candidates of the JNU Students' Union, while the ABVP won one post, after counting of votes, concluded on Sunday. The ABVP led by a few hand-picked votes in all posts. » PAGE 5

Anti-piracy Act a great enabler, says Navy chief

NEW DELHI The Maritime Anti-Piracy Act, enacted in 2022, has been a "great enabler", said Indian Navy Chief Admiral R. Hari Kumar at the Navy completed 100 days of Operation Sankalp in the Gulf of Aden. There are few countries which have an Act like this, he said. » PAGE 6



Holi

Festive mood fills the air as revellers celebrate Holi at Mandi in Himachal Pradesh on the eve of the festival. PTI

INDIA bloc to hold rally against Kejriwal's arrest

Opposition parties to stage a 'maaha rally' at Delhi's Ramila Maidan on March 31 | Top leadership of the Opposition alliance will participate to 'safeguard country's interests' | Delhi CM shows intent to stay on in his post despite the arrest after a 'flag order' from jail

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Rallying behind the Aard Aadmi Party (AAP), the Opposition INDIA bloc will hold a public event at the Ramila Maidan in Delhi on March 31 to protest against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's arrest by the Enforcement Directorate. The rally is to "safeguard the country's interests and democracy", the Delhi leadership of the AAP and the Congress announced at a joint press conference in the national capital on Sunday. "We will hold a 'maaha rally' at Ramila Maidan on March 31 against what is happening in the country. The top leadership of the INDIA bloc will participate in the event," said Gopal Redi, the AAP's Delhi convenor, who shared the stage with Delhi Ministers Atishi and Saurabh Bhardwaj, as well as Delhi Congress president Arvind Singh Lovely and other senior leaders. "The bank accounts of the oldest party of the country were sealed so that they could not even campaign for the Lok Sabha elections," Mr. Redi said, referring to the Income Tax Department's action against the Congress. "Delhi fortified" The AAP has also alleged that their headquarters on Deenadayal Upadhyay Marg and Mr. Kejriwal's residence were all blockaded by the Delhi Police. "They turned Delhi into a fortress. Elected MLAs and Ministers were detained when they were protesting. Kejriwal's family was placed under house arrest. They sealed our party office. Yesterday (Saturday), at Shaheed Park, they behaved with us as if we were criminals," Mr. Redi said.



In solidarity: AAP and Congress leaders during a press conference of the INDIA bloc in New Delhi on Sunday. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASAPUR

Meanwhile, Mr. Kejriwal on Sunday issued his first order after being in judicial custody, showing his intent to stay on as Chief Minister despite the arrest. Water Minister Atishi read out the first order sent to her from Mr. Kejriwal in writing to advise water and sewer-related pro-

be inconvenienced, make adequate arrangements for water tankers so that there is no shortage during summer. If necessary, seek the cooperation of the Lieutenant Governor as well. He will surely assist you," said the message. "Missing agencies" The Opposition has accused the Union government of missing Central law enforcement agencies against their leaders, crippling their campaign for the upcoming general election, which begins in less than a month and leaving them with an uneven playing field. A delegation of top Opposition leaders met the Election Commission of India to flag these concerns on Friday, a day after Mr. Kejriwal's arrest. "The AAP and the other Opposition parties have questioned the ECI's action against Mr. Kejriwal, claiming that no money trail has

been found in the excise policy case despite a two-year-long investigation. "However, a 760 crore money trail has been found. They arrested Saurabh Reddy (director of Aurobindo Pharma) in the excise policy case but he was released on the condition that he give a statement against Kejriwal and donate 600 crore to the BJP through electoral bonds," Mr. Redi said. Mr. Reddy was arrested by the Central agency last November in connection with the excise policy case. Recent data released by the State Bank of India shows that Aurobindo Pharma had donated 600 crore to the BJP via electoral bonds. No comments were available from Mr. Reddy or Aurobindo Pharma regarding the AAP's allegations. There was no immediate reaction to the allegations from the BJP either.

A day of delight



Festive mood fills the air as revellers celebrate Holi at Mandi in Himachal Pradesh on the eve of the festival. PTI

Pakistan mulls restarting trade relations with India

NEW DELHI Pakistan will "seriously examine" whether to restart trade relations with India, Foreign Minister Mohi-ud-Din Qazi said on Sunday. Responding to questions during a press meet in London, Mr. Qazi said he had been approached last year by Pakistani businessmen over the issue, and said any decision would follow a full discussion with all stakeholders. In 2009, both India and Pakistan had taken trade measures against each other.

Assam Police detain IIT-Guwahati student for pledge to join IS

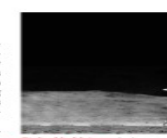
GUWAHATI The Assam Police have detained a student of the Indian Institute of Technology-Guwahati (IIT-G) who had allegedly slipped out to join the terror group IS. The fourth-year student from Okhla in Delhi had pledged support to the IS through emails and social media posts and said he planned to join the terror group. He disappeared from the IIT-G campus soon after his posts went viral. The police caught him on Saturday evening in Hajj, about 30 km northwest of Guwahati.

Kangana, Manika, Arun Govil in BJP fifth list for LS election; Varun dropped

NEW DELHI Bollywood star Kangana Ranaut and actor Arun Govil, who starred in the Ranayati series, are among the names in the BJP's fifth list of 11 candidates for 17 States for the Lok Sabha election, released on Sunday. Ms. Ranaut will contest from Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, while Mr. Govil will contest from Meerut. "The party has fielded former Union Minister Manika Gandhi from Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh, but has dropped her son Varun Gandhi from Punjab. She was replaced by Uttar Pradesh Minister Itan Prasad. Controversial MP from Ut-

It's official: 'Statio Shiv Shakti' approved as name of Chandrayaan-3 landing site

BENGALURU The International Astronomical Union (IAU) working group for Planetary System Nomenclature has approved the name 'Statio Shiv Shakti' for the landing site of Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander. The approval was given on Tuesday. Planetary system nomenclature, like terrestrial nomenclature, is used to uniquely identify a feature on the surface of a planet or satellite so that it can be easily located, described, and discussed. The Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature "contains detailed information about all names of topographic and albedo fea-



Etched in history: An image of the Chandrayaan-3 Vikram lander clicked by a navigation camera onboard the Pragyan rover. ISRO

cal features prior to the 19th century." The citation in the gazetteer for the name of the landing site of the Vikram lander reads: "Compound word from Indian mythology that depicts the masculine ('Shiva') and feminine ('Shakti') duality of nature." On August 26, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the point where the moon lander of Chandrayaan-3 touched down would be called 'Shiv Shakti'. "In Shiv, there is a resolution for the welfare of humanity and Shakti gives us the strength to fulfil those resolutions," Mr. Modi had said while announcing the name.

It's official: 'Statio Shiv Shakti' approved as name of Chandrayaan-3 landing site

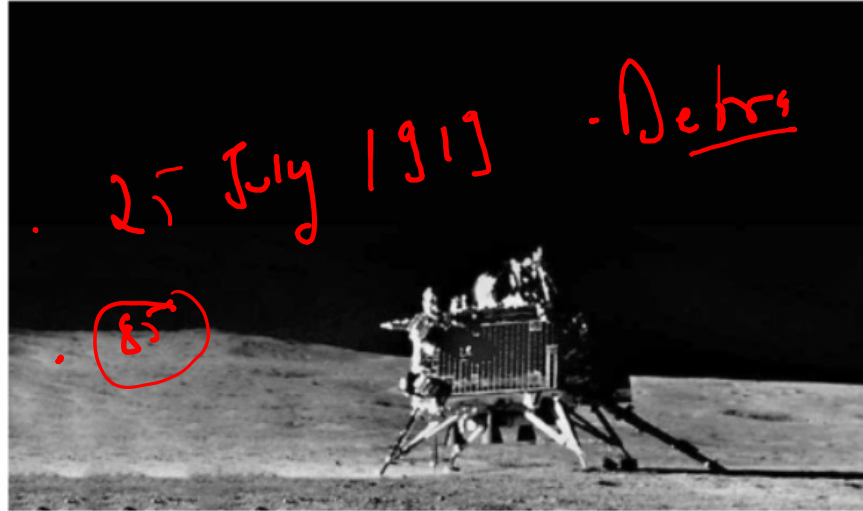
IAU Paris
Nomenclature
1919
Rule 9
19th Century

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) working group for Planetary System Nomenclature has approved the name "Statio Shiv Shakti" for the landing site of Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander. The approval was given on March 19.

Planetary nomenclature, like terrestrial nomenclature, is used to uniquely identify a feature on the surface of a planet or satellite so that it can be easily located, described, and discussed.

The Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature "contains detailed information about all names of topographic and albedo fea-



Etched in history: An image of the Chandrayaan-3 Vikram lander clicked by a navigation camera onboard the Pragyan rover. ISRO

tures on planets and satellites [and some planetary ring and ring-gap systems] that the IAU has named and approved from its founding in 1919 through the present time".

The IAU is the internationally recognised author-

ity for assigning names to planetary surface features. It follows some rules and conventions to do so.

The IAU's Rule 9 states: "No names having political, military or religious significance may be used, except for names of politi-

cal figures prior to the 19th century." The citation in the gazetteer for the name of the landing site of the Vikram lander reads: "Compound word from Indian mythology that depicts the masculine ["Shiva"] and feminine ["Shakti"] duality of nature."

On August 26, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the point where the moon lander of Chandrayaan-3 touched down would be called "Shiv Shakti".

"In Shiv, there is a resolution for the welfare of humanity and Shakti gives us the strength to fulfil those resolutions," Mr. Modi had said while announcing the name.

Can 'good sounds' help coral islands recover from bleaching?

Many coral islands, like Lakshadweep, are inhabited by people and their destruction will naturally affect the people there. Rising seas due to climate change is another problem; many island countries like Tuvalu and Vanuatu are facing the threat of submergence and have articulated their concerns at international climate conferences

By Saal Kumar

Climate change is the most serious environmental problem facing the world today. One of the main reasons for this is the global warming caused by the extraction of coal and oil, which have been underground for millennia, and burning them for industrial and non-industrial purposes to generate energy. The effects of these activities were exacerbated by other causes of global warming, such as deforestation.

Global warming has many consequences, including rising sea levels and changes in the frequency of extreme weather. Another is the destruction of coral reefs. India's Lakshadweep islands for instance are islands formed on such reefs.

Coral reefs have started to die Coral reefs are built by a type of organism that, when it accumulates, forms reefs and islands. They live in large colonies. Corals have a symbiotic relationship with microscopic algae called zooxanthellae, which live in the coral's tissues. Life becomes tough when the temperature of the water around them rises. When it does, the corals expel the zooxanthellae. An important visual symptom of these effects is that the colour of the coral reef changes, and subsequently they die off in droves. This event is called bleaching.

However, not all coral bleaching events are due to warm water. Ocean acidification - which is when the pH of the water drops as more carbon dioxide dissolves in it - is another well-known cause. More acidic water reduces the availability of calcium minerals that the corals need to build and repair their exoskeletons.

In many parts of the world, coral reefs have started to die due to global warming experienced over the years. The U.S. lost half of its coral reefs in the Caribbean in one year in 2005 due to a large-scale bleaching event after warm waters around the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico expanded southward. When scientists collated satellite data of the region from the previous 20 years, they were able to confirm that the 2005 event exerted more thermal stress than those in the previous 20 years combined.

A source of hope

The Great Barrier Reef in Australia is the largest coral reef in the world. Recently many people there protested strongly against a plan to open a new coal mine because they were worried about the survival of the reef - not because the mine would directly affect the reef but because



Staghorn corals seen in the waters off Man Nai Island, near Rayong province, Thailand in February. REUTERS

of the effects of burning fossil fuels at large. Many coral islands like our Lakshadweep are inhabited by people.

The destruction of these coral reefs will naturally affect the people there. A rising sea level due to climate change is another problem for them. Many small island countries like Tuvalu and Vanuatu are facing the threat of submergence and have articulated their concerns at international climate conferences. Their submergence is a certainty now; the only question is when it will happen. Therefore, it is very scary that the coral reefs themselves are being destroyed and, axiomatically, any chance of saving the corals can and does become a source of hope.

It is against this background that about 5,000 scientists gathered in New Orleans, in the U.S., in February this year for the American Geophysical Union's biennial 'Ocean Sciences' meeting. Here, Amy Apprill, a scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Massachusetts and who studies coral reefs, provided information about a study she had been part of.

The coral polyps

To understand this study, we need to first understand what a coral reef is. Coral reefs are built by an organism called a polyp. A coral group is a colony of a large



number of genetically identical polyps. Each polyp is a sac-like animal, usually a few millimeters wide and a few centimeters tall. It has a set of tentacles surrounding a mouth-like opening. Polyps are gregarious; they like to socialise.

Every polyp also sheds an exoskeleton at its bottom and over many generations this discarded substance accumulates to form a large structure up to several metres wide. The polyps organise their lives around this structure. A coral reef is formed when a large number of polyps collect in this way. Polyps use sound to communicate with each other. Naturally, the sound of a healthy colony will differ from that of an unhealthy colony. Dr. Apprill and her team used this distinction in their new study.

The sound of a health colony The investigators set about examining whether a degraded reef could be enriched by replaying healthy reef sounds. They conducted a series of field studies in the Virgin Islands of the U.S., where they quantified the settlement rates of three species of corals with two different breeding strategies.

They found that in degraded coral reefs, the settlement rate increased when such sounds were played using a novel underwater speaker system. They also reported that the settlement rate was higher closer to the speaker and reduced as one moved away from the speaker, indicating the impact of the sound they played.

Finally, it would be a mistake to think the researchers have solved the reef settlement problem posed by climate change. Their study was just an experiment. If what they did is tested repeatedly and at least a good fraction of instances are successful, then we can decide that their technique can help in practice. But we still don't know what problems might arise when this project is implemented on a large scale to save coral reefs. We also need to find out the volume at which the sound has to be played and if there are any other parameters to be controlled.

In sum, the new study is just a pointer, even if also a positive one.

(Sasi Kumar is a scientist formerly at the Centre for Earth Science Studies, Thiruvananthapuram.)

THE GIST

Corals have a symbiotic relationship with algae called zooxanthellae. When the temperature of water rises, corals expel zooxanthellae. An important visual symptom of these effects is that the colour of the coral reef changes, and they die off. This event is called bleaching.

Corals reefs are dying due to warming. The U.S. lost half its reefs in the Caribbean in one year in 2005 due to a large-scale bleaching event. When data of the region was collated, it confirmed that the 2005 event exerted more thermal stress than those in the previous 20 years combined.

In degraded coral reefs, settlement rate increased when healthy reef sounds were played. The settlement rate was higher closer to the speaker and reduced as one moved away from the speaker, indicating the impact of the sounds played.

BIG SHOT



The Pozo de la Bacteria, a geological anomaly in the Cuatro Ciénegas wetland in the Chihuahuan Desert, in Mexico. The 170 cactus-ringed pools contain important species of fish, snails, turtles, bacteria, and unique living rock structures that offer important clues to life on the earth millions of years ago. However, water is rapidly draining from the wetland. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

Abel Prize: a Nobel for mathematicians

Vasudevan Mukunth

The Abel Prize for 2024 has been awarded to French mathematician Michael Talagrand for "contributions to probability theory and functional analysis, with outstanding applications in mathematical physics and statistics".

Every year, the King of Norway awards the Abel Prize to at least one scientist who has made a significant contribution to mathematics. The Government of Norway has been presenting the prize since 2003, and has named it after the Nobel Prizes, awarded in neighbouring Sweden, including a cash prize of 9 million Norwegian kroner (approximately Rs 7 crore) for the laureates.

This said, the idea for the prize was first floated back in 1899, after the Norwegian mathematician Marius Sophus Lie founded out the Alfred Nobel's will didn't include a prize for mathematics. The year 1899 was also the birth centenary of Niels Henrik Abel, a famous Norwegian mathematician after whom the prize came to be named. The Abel Committee selects each year's winners.

Dr. Talagrand's work in particular has been credited with "making random processes more predictable," as one *Nature* article put it. According to his biography on the Abel Prize website, Dr. Talagrand couldn't see in one eye as the result of a genetic condition. A



French mathematician Michel Talagrand who has won the Abel Prize for Mathematics. He is an expert on probability theory and functional analysis.

decade later, when he developed trouble in his other eye, he became scared and studied hard at school, eventually discovering his knack for mathematics.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'

Abel Prize: a Nobel for mathematicians

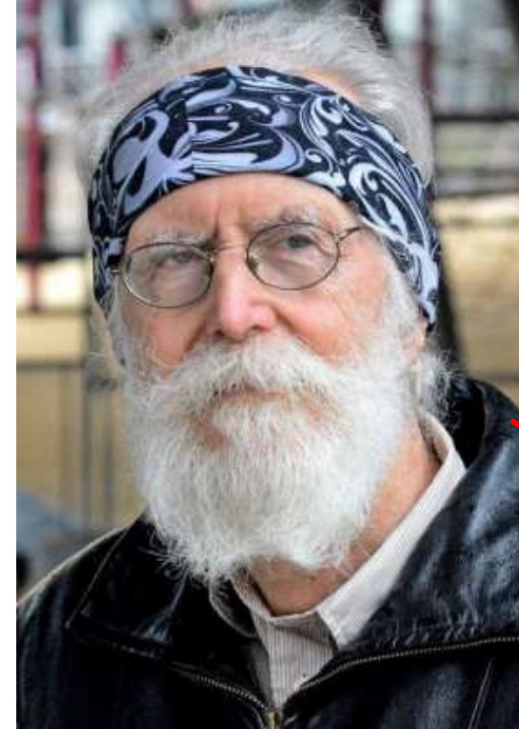
Vasudevan Mukunth

The Abel Prize for 2024 has been awarded to French mathematician Michael Talagrand for “contributions to probability theory and functional analysis, with outstanding applications in mathematical physics and statistics”.

Every year, the King of Norway awards the Abel Prize to at least one scholar who has made a significant contribution to mathematics. The Government of Norway has been presenting the prize since 2003, and has modelled it after the Nobel Prizes, awarded in neighbouring Sweden, including a cash prize of 9 million Norwegian kroner (approximately Rs 7 crore) for the laureates.

This said, the idea for the prize was first floated back in 1899, after the Norwegian mathematician Marius Sophus Lie found out that Alfred Nobel’s will didn’t include a prize for mathematics. The year 1899 was also the birth centenary of Niels Hendrik Abel, a famous Norwegian mathematician after whom the prize came to be named. The Abel Committee selects each year’s winners.

Dr. Talagrand’s work in particular has been credited with “making random processes more predictable,” as one *Nature* article put it. According to his biography on the Abel Prize website, Dr. Talagrand couldn’t see in one eye as the result of a genetic condition. A



French mathematician Michel Talagrand who has won the Abel Prize for Mathematics. He is an expert on probability theory and functional analysis. AFP

decade later, when he developed trouble in his other eye, he became scared and studied hard at school, eventually discovering his knack for mathematics.

For feedback and suggestions
for ‘Science’, please write to
science@thehindu.co.in
with the subject ‘Daily page’

Handwritten notes in red ink:

- Norway
- 1899
- Marius Lie
- 1899 → Hendrik
- Abel

2024

French
Michel
Talagrand



Mexico

Wetland

The Poza de la Becerra, a geological anomaly in the Cuatro Ciénegas wetland in the Chihuahuan Desert, in Mexico. The 170 cactus-ringed pools contain important species of fish, snails, turtles, bacteria, and unique living rock structures that offer important clues to life on the earth millions of years ago. However, water is rapidly draining from the wetland.

The right diagnosis for tuberculosis

Tuberculosis, commonly known as TB, is a disease which continues to impact millions globally. Finding the TB epidemic by 2030 is among the health targets of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India is working towards eliminating TB five years ahead of the global 2030 target. This is an ambitious time frame. How well-positioned is India to achieve this?

A macro view suggests that India has done exceptionally well so far. A strong political intent is driving the right policies. In fact, in November 2023, the World Health Organisation (WHO) acknowledged India's success on two major fronts: in reducing TB incidence by 16% from 2015 to 2022 (close to double the pace at which global TB incidence is declining) and in reducing TB mortality by 18% during the same period, keeping in line with the global trend.

The weakest aspect
However, as Dr. Madhukar Pai, Dr. Puneet K. Dewan, and Dr. Sourav Swaminathan pointed out in "Transforming tuberculosis diagnosis" in *Nature*, globally, diagnosis continues to be the weakest aspect of TB control. According to the WHO's "Global Tuberculosis Report 2023", for the first time globally, 7.5 million patients were diagnosed with TB in 2022, yet there remained a large gap of some 3.1 million people who probably fell ill with TB but were not diagnosed and reported to national TB programmes. As the article surmised succinctly, "If we cannot find TB, we cannot treat TB. And if we cannot treat TB, we cannot end TB".

So, how do we find TB? We can detect it by leveraging and optimising the systems and processes already in place, as well as by quickly deploying newer proven technologies that take diagnosis as close to the point of care as possible.

Take, for instance, the first step



Sarabjit Chaudha
is Regional Technical Director, TB and South-East Asia at FIND

of screening patients: India regularly conducts active case-finding drives across the country. But it will be useful to reassess the screening procedures in place. A recent *Lancet* study as well as the Indian Council of Medical Research's "National TB Prevalence Survey in India" revealed that as many as 20% of people for symptoms is good, it is not substantive. Studies also show that in many cases, despite not showing any apparent symptoms, people may have infectious TB and may even be transmitting it.

X-ray imaging is a quick and efficient way to detect these patients. X-ray technology has advanced dramatically. Now, we not only have portable hand-held devices, but also software driven by Artificial Intelligence that can read digital X-ray images and detect possible TB with a high degree of certainty. This must be used on a wider scale so that we can find and also treat potential patients into the care cascade faster.

While X-rays are good screening tools, it is imperative to detect TB bacteria in the patient with absolute certainty. The age-old sputum microscopy test has its limitations which are addressed by the newer molecular tests that are rapid, accurate, and even detect resistance against drugs. To be significant, the NAAT (nucleic acid amplification) tests in India have gone up from 651 in 2017 to more than 5,000 in 2022. The utility of these tests is limited due to their high costs and issues with accessibility. Moreover, a large number of existing technologies including molecular and more proactive in collection and testing. This comes in the form of sputum induction, which may not be as easy for everyone, especially young children, to undergo. Another novel, sample transportation, especially in remote and hilly districts, remains a challenge. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when an alternative to

nasopharyngeal swabs was introduced in the form of simpler nasal swabs, saliva, and self-collection, the testing coverage increased. We must therefore be on the lookout for newer technologies and approaches to diagnosis.

Other collection techniques
It is time to actively explore other collection techniques such as tongue swabs which can be a true game changer. Here, the sample is extracted by simply rubbing the swab in the oral cavity. This augments our point-of-care testing abilities and also reduces the costs for overall diagnosis of TB. We could also better utilise another invaluable resource: PCR machines, which served us well during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are already fitted with the right diagnostic technology and can get to the last mile across the country effectively.

Newer technologies such as the urine LAM test can also be used to detect cases in the general population.

This is a rapid test which is easily performed. It can help in screening for both pulmonary TB (lungs) and extra-pulmonary TB (organs other than the lungs). The TB diagnostics pipeline is rich with several new innovative tests on the anvil. However, to maximise these tests, their rapid validation and adoption under the programme is critical. To ensure we truly reach the last mile, point-of-care testing and diagnosis is imperative. The good news is we already have a diagnostic framework that is forward-looking. We need to simply improve implementation and be more proactive in deploying new technologies. We need to ensure that new technologies are streamlined and rolled out faster and build capacity at the sub-district level to conduct such tests as needed. Minor re-adjustments will make a challenge. During the COVID-19 elimination drive.

The TB diagnostics pipeline is rich with several new innovative tests on the anvil. However, to maximise these tests, their rapid validation and adoption under the programme is critical. To ensure we truly reach the last mile, point-of-care testing and diagnosis is imperative. The good news is we already have a diagnostic framework that is forward-looking. We need to simply improve implementation and be more proactive in deploying new technologies. We need to ensure that new technologies are streamlined and rolled out faster and build capacity at the sub-district level to conduct such tests as needed. Minor re-adjustments will make a challenge. During the COVID-19 elimination drive.



Things fall apart: can AAP hold?

Kejriwal's arrest has put the AAP in a difficult position and the Congress in a quandary

STATE OF PLAY

Jaideep Dey Bhanu
@jdebhanu@thehindu.co.in

Politics in the national capital has been in a full circle with the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on corruption charges by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). Mr. Kejriwal rose to power a decade ago by launching scathing attacks on corruption against the Congress, and particularly former Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit, now finds himself having to prove his and his party's "katta imandori" (every honest) credentials and that too from prison.

An uneasy alliance
While Mr. Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) faces its biggest challenge yet, just before the Lok Sabha elections, the Congress too finds itself in a predicament. The party, which ruled Delhi for 15 years before the AAP rode to power in 2015, has no seats in the Delhi Legislative Assembly and no representation from Delhi in Parliament. In this context, the 4-3 seat-sharing arrangement for Delhi's seven Lok Sabha seats under the Indian National Developmental and Progressive Alliance (INDIA) bloc can be seen as an attempt by the Congress to stay in the political mix in Delhi. This alliance is an uneasy one, however, given that the two parties are rivals elsewhere. In Punjab, for instance, the AAP and Congress have chosen to fight it alone; this is where the AAP came to power. First, it was the Congress in 2022. While the cadre of both the parties are still awaiting instructions from their leadership on how they plan to support each other, the bitter rivalry for so many years, the factor that

defence against her. No one has seen the "trunk" so far." However, leaders from both parties have said that they will respect the "ralliance dharna" and put aside their differences to fight the BJP. They believe that they will have a mathematical advantage if they do not split the anti-BJP votes.

Jealousy in BJP
Meanwhile, the BJP remains confident. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, while addressing an event in Delhi's Ferozka recently, commented on the alliance saying "I'm still zero" and expressed confidence that the BJP will win all seven seats for a third consecutive time. The mood at a Holi Milan organised in the Delhi BJP office a day after the arrest of Mr. Kejriwal was jubilant with the alliance saying "I'm still zero" and expressed confidence that the BJP will win all seven seats for a third consecutive time. The mood at a Holi Milan organised in the Delhi BJP office a day after the arrest of Mr. Kejriwal was jubilant with the alliance saying "I'm still zero" and expressed confidence that the BJP will win all seven seats for a third consecutive time. The mood at a Holi Milan organised in the Delhi BJP office a day after the arrest of Mr. Kejriwal was jubilant with the alliance saying "I'm still zero" and expressed confidence that the BJP will win all seven seats for a third consecutive time.

The irony is that the alleged Delhi liquor scam that is being probed by Central agencies was an issue that was raked up by the Congress. In 2022, Ch. Anil Kumar, who was the Delhi Congress president, was among the first to file a complaint with the Delhi Police alleging a "multi-crore" scam in the formation and implementation of the policy. Other Congress leaders such as party treasurer Ajay Maken have also raised allegations of corruption against Mr. Kejriwal, attacking him for spending public funds on building a lavish residence and office.

Reacting to Mr. Kejriwal's arrest, Congress leaders and former President of India Pranab Mukherjee's daughter Sharmistha Mukherjee, on X (formerly Twitter) that "Karna chadhes up", she said, "He and [the] Anam Hazare gang were responsible for making [the] (BJP) sanctionable, baseless and wild allegations against [the] Congress including Sheila Dikshit saying he has "trunk loads" of evi-

Charting women's trajectory in parliaments globally

As of 2022, in close to 60 countries, the share of women in parliament was 20% or less

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

The year 2024 is being hailed as the biggest year for democracy, with 45% of the global population preparing to exercise their voting rights or having already cast their ballots. This becomes imperative to assess how women are represented in politics and leadership roles. Women's representation in political spheres improved in the latter half of the 20th century, with significant progress made in many nations in securing voting rights and parliamentary seats, and in climbing to the highest political offices. However, this has been uneven. And despite substantial gains, women continue to constitute a minority in most parliamentary bodies and are rarely seen in top political leadership positions.

Data compiled by political scientists and researchers and colleagues show that until the mid-19th century, universal suffrage was virtually non-existent for both men and women across the world (Chart 1). However, a stark divergence then emerged, as men in certain nations were granted voting rights while women were excluded. New Zealand broke this pattern by extending universal suffrage to women in 1893.

The gap between male and female political participation widened in the early 20th century, despite women gaining suffrage in more countries as their voting rights expanded even further. By the onset of World War II, men had the right to vote in one out of three countries, while women did in only one out of six countries. The gap then rapidly closed when the voting rights discrimination against women ended in many countries, and both women and men gained the right to vote in many others. Chart 1 shows the share of countries where both

men and women have the right to vote, the share of countries where only men have the right to vote, and the share of countries where there is no universal right to vote.

In the early 20th century, women were largely absent from national parliaments, according to data based on the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project. Norway first elected women to parliament in 1907; nearly 10% of the country's parliamentary seats were occupied by women (Chart 2). But the latter half of the 20th century witnessed a significant surge in the number of women entering parliament. This trend accelerated in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Rwanda's parliamentary composition surpassed the 50% mark for women's representation in 2008, setting a remarkable precedent. In the same year, 19 countries such as Argentina, Cuba, Finland, and Sweden had between 40% and 50% women parliamentarians.

However, despite the progress, women's political representation has been limited and uneven. Women make up about half of all the members of parliaments in only a few countries. As of 2022, in close to 60 countries, the share of women in parliament was 20% or less. And in three countries, there are no women in parliament. The chart shows the share of seats in the lower or single chamber of the legislature held by women as of 2022.

While women's representation in parliament is important, so is their representation in a country's highest political office. Data from V-Dem show that at any given point in time, almost all political chief executives have been men (Chart 4). Here, the term "chief executive" means the head of state or head of government, depending on who has more power. There has been a slight increase in the share of countries led by women in the last three decades. However, the share of countries where women occupy the post of chief executive is still less than 10%.

Unequal and uneven representation



Chart 1: The chart shows the share of countries with universal right to vote. Figures in %.



Chart 2: The chart shows the percentage of seats in the lower or single chamber of the legislature held by women as of 2022.

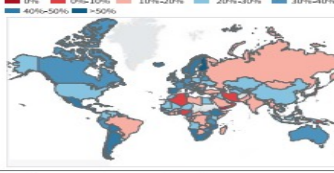


Chart 4: Share of countries by gender of chief executive as of 2022.

The charts were sourced from the World In Data's article titled "Women's major advances in politics — but the world is still far from equal".



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 25, 1974

Rebel troops' bid to overthrow Amin fails

Kampala, March 24: Rebel troops today appeared to have lost a major battle and mortal battle to overthrow General Idi Amin's military regime. Government information organs remained silent after the fighting ended about dawn, giving rise to speculation that Gen. Amin had fled. But a newsmen saw Gen. Amin driving an open, unescorted jeep along Kampala's main street about noon. Several friends were in the jeep with him.

Uganda Radio later broadcast a message said to be from Gen. Amin, asserting that conditions were back to normal. The message blamed the fighting on a false report that an invading force was trying to kill the general and take over the country.

Tanks and armoured cars patrolled Kampala this morning. Most soldiers withdrew to their barracks by mid-afternoon, leaving armed guards of Uganda Radio and the Information Ministry. Groceries were closed and a few civilians were on the streets. Uganda Radio gave the Government's explanation said military police, members of the white battalion and paratroopers had created "strong points" in Kampala following the false report of an impending invasion. The broadcast said Gen. Amin, who spoke to the rebels this morning and told them that the officer who had spread the rumour later shot himself and "the others have run away."

Gen. Amin offered condolences to relatives of soldiers and others killed in the fighting. Uganda Radio said. The radio added that Gen. Amin told the white battalion that if they were dissatisfied with his command, they should kill him or dismiss him, rather than "keep the good people of Kampala up all night running around."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 25, 1924

Compulsory elementary education

A ladies meeting: A large number of ladies met at Madras Hindu Secondary School Washermanpet on Friday last and passed a resolution in support of the introduction of Free and Compulsory Elementary Education for boys and girls in the city of Madras. Miss Jabagnanam B.A. presided at the meeting.

60 countries → 20% ↓

Charting women's trajectory in parliaments globally

As of 2022, in close to 60 countries, the share of women in parliament was 20% or less

Chart 3: The chart shows the percentage of seats in the lower or single chamber of the legislature held by women as of 2022

0% 0%-10% 10%-20% 20%-30% 30%-40%
40%-50% >50%

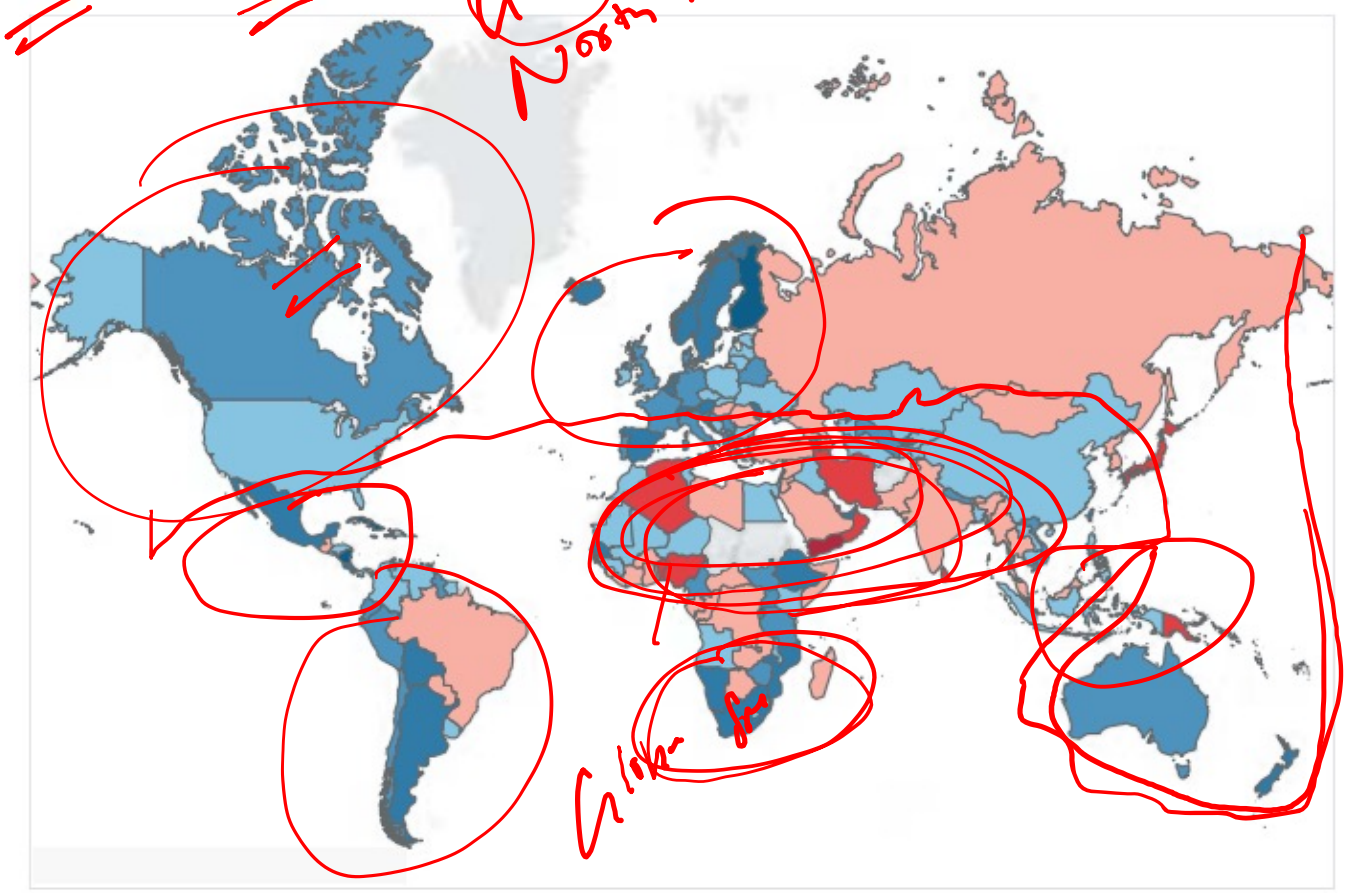
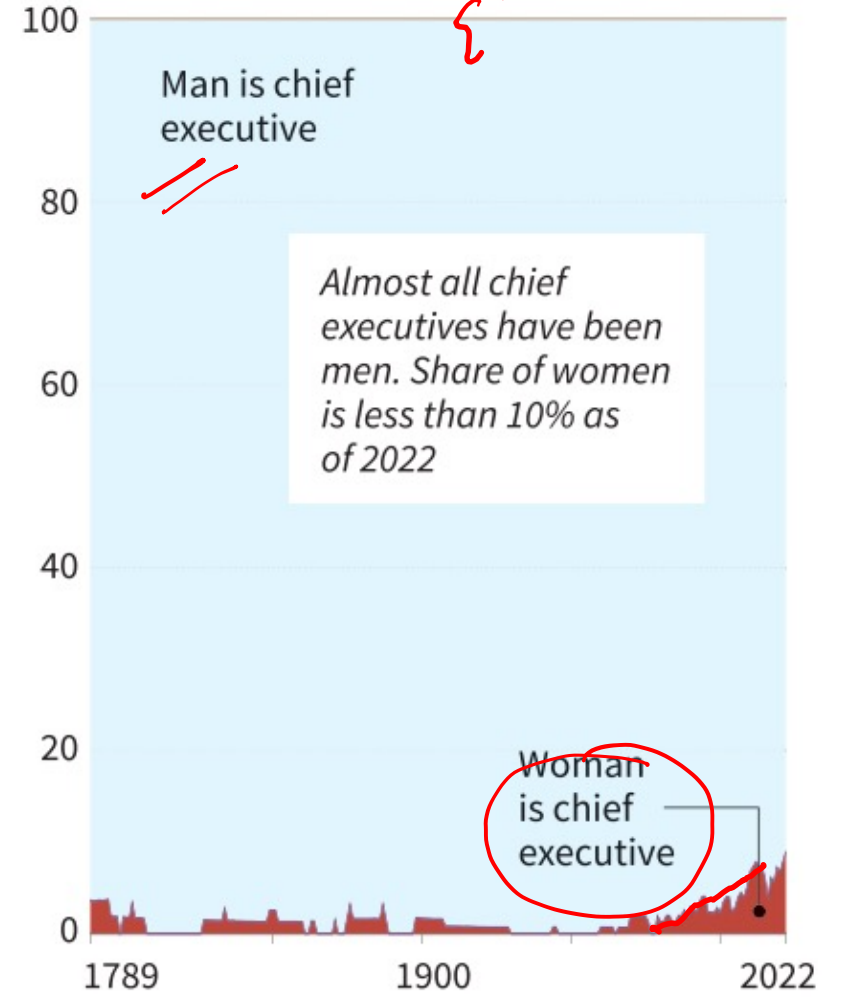


Chart 4: Share of countries by gender of the chief executive



The Indian Express wishes its readers A Happy Holi. We are closed today. There will be no edition of the newspaper on Tuesday, March 26, 2024.

INSIDE



LEFT PANEL SWEEPS JNU STUDENTS' UNION POLLS HELD AFTER 4-YEAR GAP. JDU, BSP RELEASE LIST OF LOK SABHA CANDIDATES. PAGES 5, 7

Will consider restoring trade ties with India: Pak Foreign Minister Dar

Pak Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar

SAJJAD HUSSAIN ISLAMABAD, MARCH 24

PAKISTAN WILL "seriously" consider restoring trade ties with India that remained suspended since August 2019, Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar said in diplomatic talks towards the neighbouring nation.

Pakistan will consider restoring trade ties with India, he said. "We will seriously look into matters of trade with India," Dar was quoted as saying by the Express Tribune newspaper.

Pakistan downgraded its diplomatic ties with New Delhi after the Indian government abrogated Article 370 of the

THE WORLD

RUSSIA MOURNS SHOOTING VICTIMS

RUSSIA mourned the victims of a shooting in the city of Khabarovsk on Monday, saying the attack was a "heinous crime".

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

SHAJU PHILIP

TRIPUNJAPURAM, MARCH 24

HIS MALAYALAM novel Mahamurikam, about a sorcerer who gets close to a landlord's family and woos the daughter, has been read by more than 50,000 people on an online platform. In hundreds of comments, his readers praise the horror novel — serialised in six parts — and urge him to give them more.

FIFTH LIST OF 111 TAKES BJP CANDIDATES COUNT TO 402 Pradhan, Prasad, Kangana, ex-HC judge in latest BJP LS list; Varun, VK Singh out

Naveen Jindal among 3 handed tickets the day they joined party

LIZ MATHEW NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

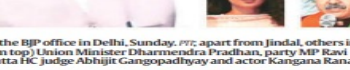
UNION MINISTER Dharmendra Pradhan, former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Kiran Kumar Reddy, actor Kangana Ranaut, former Calcutta High Court Judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay, Shibu Soren's daughter-in-law and former JMM MLA Sita Soren were among 111 Lok Sabha candidates named by the BJP in its fifth list released Sunday night.

LIZ MATHEW NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

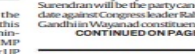
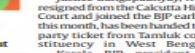
Industrialist and former Congress MP Naveen Jindal, who announced his resignation on X

shortly before he joined the BJP Sunday, has been fielded from Karakushera. Two others who joined the party Sunday and have been handed Lok Sabha tickets are Haiyana minister and independent MLA Ranjit Singh

Chautala (Hisar) and former YSRCP MP and MLA, Velagapudi Venkateshwar Rao (Tirupati). Omissions included Minister of State General V K Singh (retired) who announced before the release of the list that he



Industrialist Naveen Jindal at the BJP office in Delhi, Sunday, apart from Jindal, others in the BJP list are (clockwise from top) Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, party MP Ravi Shankar Prasad, former Calcutta HC judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay and actor Kangana Ranaut



would not be contesting — the party choice for Chazalabad this time is MLA and former UP minister Atul Garg; in Pilibhit, MP Varun Gandhi makes way for UP minister Jitin Prasad — there is buzz that Varun may contest as

RELATED REPORTS PAGES 6, 7

ASI to remove 18 'untraceable' monuments from its list of protected sites

DIVYAA NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

IN THE first such largescale exercise in decades, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has put out a list of 18 untraceable monuments to remove, which it wants to delist as, according to the agency, they no longer hold national importance.

The monuments facing delisting include Kos Minar No.13 at Mujesar village in Harayana; Bara Khamba Cemetery in Delhi; Burdigha in Karnataka; Rangoon in Jhansi; Cemetery at Ghughra in Lucknow; and Tella Nala Buddhist ruins, which form part of a deserted village in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

Future Gaming and Hotel Services Pvt Ltd

Bonds purchased before ED action 0, after action Rs. 1,265 cr. Redemptions: TMC (Rs 542 crore), DMRC (Rs 503 crore), YSHCP (Rs 154 crore), BJP (Rs 100 crore), Congress (Rs 50 crore), SIM (Rs 11 crore), SDF (Rs 5 crore)

100 crore each. For instance, the top donor Future Gaming, owned by 'lottery king' Santogji Martin, did not purchase a single electoral bond until a year after it faced an ED probe on alleged money laundering charges.

In the case of Haldia Energy, its purchase of poll bonds surged 16-fold in value after it came into the central agencies' radar. The company purchased Rs 22 crore worth poll bonds in favour of the BJP (Rs 16 crore) and TMC (Rs 6

Nitheesh P R's online novel

has been read by more than 50,000 people

an independent; in Uttara Kannada, M N Anantakumar Hegde, whose controversial statements lopped up a row, has been dropped; in Orissa, veteran leader Rajendra Agrawal has been replaced by Anurag Ghosh, known for his role of Lord Ram in the Ramprasad television serial.

Kerala BJP president K Surendran will be the party candidate against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Varanasi constituency.

DELHI MINISTER ATISHI WITH OTHER INDIA BLOC LEADERS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN DELHI

IN HIS first "direction" to the Delhi government after being sent to the custody of the Enforcement Directorate until March 28, Chief Minister Atishu Kejriwal has asked Water Minister Atishi to resolve water and sewer-related issues in various parts of the Capital.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Opposition INDIA bloc announced they would hold a joint rally at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi on March 31 to protest Kejriwal's arrest and display solidarity against "authoritarianism" and "anti-democraticism".

Kejriwal was arrested last Thursday by the ED in connection with the probe into the Delhi excise policy case. The agency obtained his custody Friday evening, hours after it told a Delhi court that he was the "kingpin" of the "scam" under investigation — a charge Kejriwal's lawyers rejected.

At a press conference, Atishi, quoting the "written directions" of developed UP on PAGE 2

THE MODEL Code of Conduct (MCC) has often been cited by the ruling BJP as hindering development and governance. However, the only dataset collated by the Election Commission (EC), at the request of the Law Commission, during its feasibility study on simultaneous polls (SP), reveals that more than half of the government referendums were cleared by the poll watchdog within 72 hours of receipt during the Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections in 2017, and one-third during the Karnataka Assembly elections in 2018.

Documents accessed by The Indian Express under the Right to Information Act show that the EC in a meeting held with the Law Commission on May 16, 2018, was requested to share data on the time taken to reply

owned. Nitheesh also lived in the same town, not far away from Vijayan's family. Nitheesh's father had abandoned his family years ago and his mother worked as a house help.

Continued on page 2

Kejriwal sends first direction to his govt from ED custody, Opp rally on Mar 31

Told us to resolve water scarcity and prepare for summer: Minister Atishi



Delhi Minister Atishi with other INDIA bloc leaders at a press conference in Delhi. Atishi (left)

RELATED REPORTS PAGES 6, 7

EXERCISE POLICY CASE

excise policy case. The agency obtained his custody Friday evening, hours after it told a Delhi court that he was the "kingpin" of the "scam" under investigation — a charge Kejriwal's lawyers rejected.

At a press conference, Atishi, quoting the "written directions" of developed UP on PAGE 2

Over 50 per cent govt proposals cleared within 72 hrs during poll code: EC 2018 data

DAMINI NATH NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

THE MODEL Code of Conduct (MCC) has often been cited by the ruling BJP as hindering development and governance.

Documents accessed by The Indian Express under the Right to Information Act show that the EC in a meeting held with the Law Commission on May 16, 2018, was requested to share data on the time taken to reply

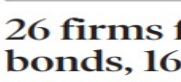
owned. Nitheesh also lived in the same town, not far away from Vijayan's family. Nitheesh's father had abandoned his family years ago and his mother worked as a house help.

A local resident said, "Vijayan's faith was rooted in superstitions. Nitheesh had explored it and there were regular pujas at his home. Vijayan even believed that eventually led to a dispute between Vijayan and Nitheesh, which, the office said, led to Vijayan's murder in 2023.

Continued on page 2

HOLI WITH FORCES

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh celebrates Holi with soldiers in Leh on Sunday. Singh was earlier supposed to visit soldiers in Slachen, but his visit was cancelled due to inclement weather.



26 firms facing agencies' heat bought bonds, 16 of them after knock on door

Bonds worth ₹5,179 cr bought by the 26 firms; BJP got 37%, TMC 18%, Cong 12%

ANJISHNU DAS NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

OF 26 companies that bought the electoral bonds and have faced action by investigative agencies, 16 donated to political parties through bonds only after they came under the radar of these agencies. Further, the donations of another six companies surged after these agencies started cracking down on them.

A scrutiny of the 26 companies by The Indian Express reveals the parties that benefited included the BJP, which rules at the Centre, and got 37.3% of the bonds purchased by these companies, and other ruling parties

EXERCISE NETWORK

MEGHA ENGG TOP DONOR FOR BRS TOO, GAVE POLL BONDS WORTH RS 185 CR

in states like the TMC got 18.29%, DMRC 11.32%, BJP 4.48% and BRS 8.59%. The Congress, which rules in five states, got 11.97%.

Overall, between April 2019 and February 2024, these 26 companies bought Rs 7,006.65 crore in bonds before facing agencies' actions and Rs 4,976.6 crore after. Ten of these companies donated a total of at least Rs

Horror novel, black magic, 2 killings: Kerala double murder unravels

where his serialised novel began appearing from October 2018. The story had all the ingredients of a hit horror flick — revenge, witchcraft, and a murder. However, the writer, a self-proclaimed black magic practitioner, is now also accused in two murders spanning over eight years in a case that police stumbled upon during an investigation in a robbery. Further investigations revealed a twisted tale that had uncanny similarities with the plot of his 2018 novel.

(27) from Kattappana town in Kerala's Idukki district during an attempted robbery at an auto mobile workshop.

Subsequently, the police contacted the relatives of the family, who indicated that Vijayan's head of the family, had been murdered in the same town last September. Further investigation found that the neighbour, who had attacked the victim, was the same man in the guise of performing black magic for the family. The man, allegedly impregnated Vijayan's daughter and she delivered a child in July 2016. The newborn was allegedly killed four days after birth, with both Vijayan's and Vishnu's help, according to police.

the floor of one of the rooms at their rented house. Inspector N Suresh Kumar, who is investigating the case, said Nitheesh's serialised novel had many similarities to the first crime. "There are a lot of similarities between the story and the sequence of events that led up to the first murder. He had developed a close relationship with Vijayan's family under the guise of performing black magic for them. Vijayan was interested in black magic and Nitheesh's mother and sister. The women were found to be in a mentally unstable condition."

Nitheesh studied up to class 12 and later started working as a black magic practitioner. After the killing of the newborn, the police said, the woman's family came further under Nitheesh's influence. "They acted as if a meeting held with the police and Nitheesh's father was engaged in the case. The inspector believed that eventually led to a dispute between Vijayan and Nitheesh, which, the office said, led to Vijayan's murder in 2023.

Before getting embroiled with Nitheesh, Vijayan, a middle class farmer, was leading a quiet life in Kattappana in a house



Nitheesh P R's online novel has been read by more than 50,000 people

side a room. They were Vishnu's mother and sister. The women were found to be in a mentally unstable condition."



Inter-Ministerial Joint Workshop on Blue Economy

- 
- **The Ministry of Earth Sciences** hosted the **Inter-Ministerial Joint Workshop on Blue Economy**.
 - **About**
 - MoES has engaged with the **World Bank** as a knowledge partner to undertake a **technical study** and prepare a report titled **‘India’s Blue Economy: Pathways for resource-efficient, inclusive and resilient growth in India’**.
 -
- 

U-1.

- The report is expected to cover the areas related to global best practices in Blue Economy implementation, ocean accounting framework, institutional strengthening and innovative finance mechanisms towards **implementing the Blue Economy Policy framework.**
- **What is the Blue Economy?**
- It is referred as the **sustainable use of ocean resources** for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem.
-





THE BLUE ECONOMY.

Sustainable



~~uses smart shipping to lessen the impacts on the environment~~



~~is inclusive and improves the lives of all~~



~~harnesses renewable energy~~



~~is based on sustainable fisheries~~



~~takes action against illegal fishing~~



~~creates jobs, reduces poverty and ends hunger~~



protects coastal communities from the impacts of climate change



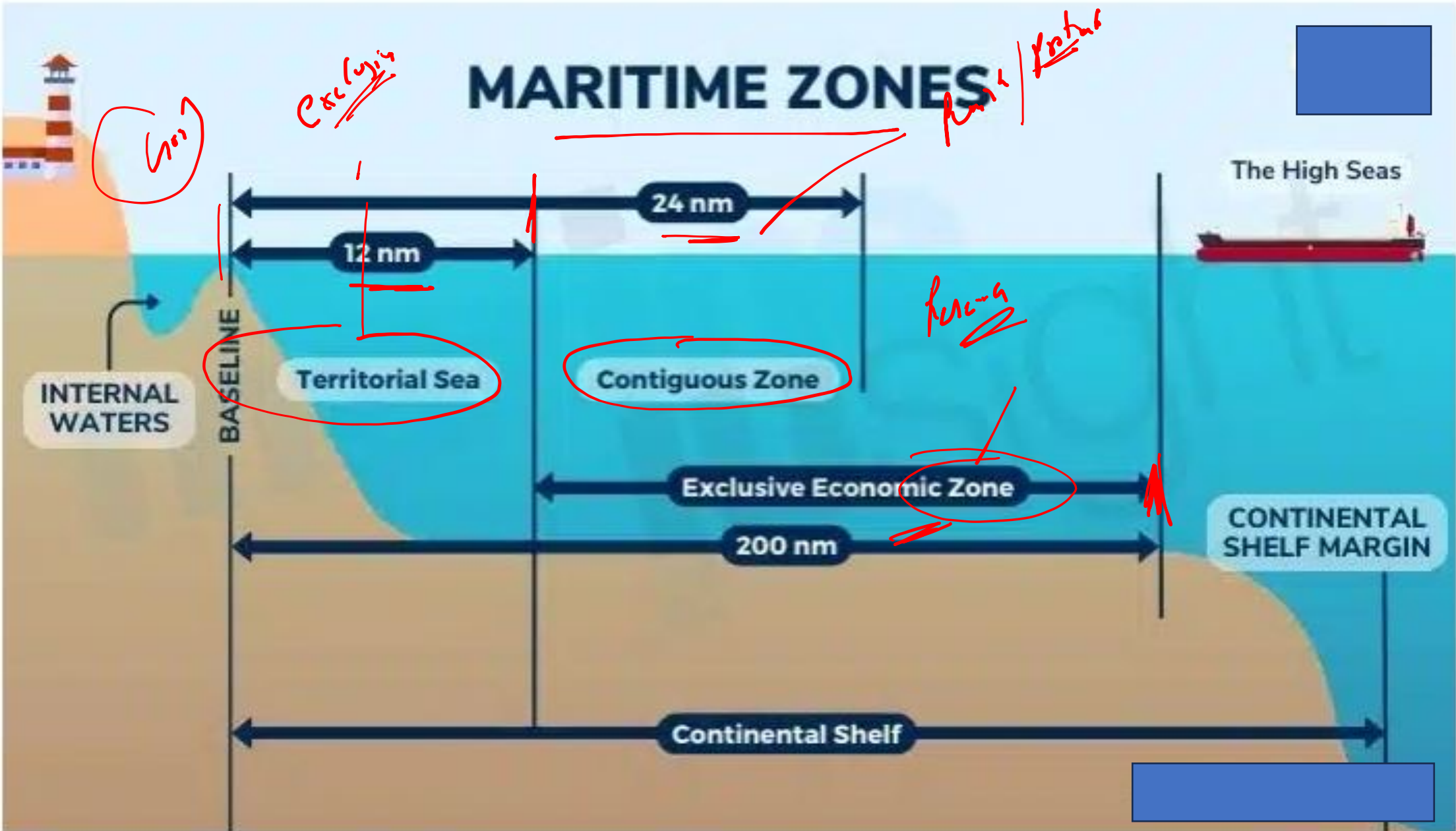
tackles marine litter and oceans pollution

~~conserves marine life and oceans~~



- **India's Blue Economy**
- India has a **7,517 km long coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** of over two million square km is rich in living and non-living resources.
- India's blue economy accounts for **roughly 4% of the GDP** and is estimated to increase once the mechanism is improved.
- The coastal economy also sustains over 4 million fisherfolk and other coastal communities.
- Four primary industries in India can fuel its blue economy; **fishing, aquaculture, ports, and shipping.**

MARITIME ZONES



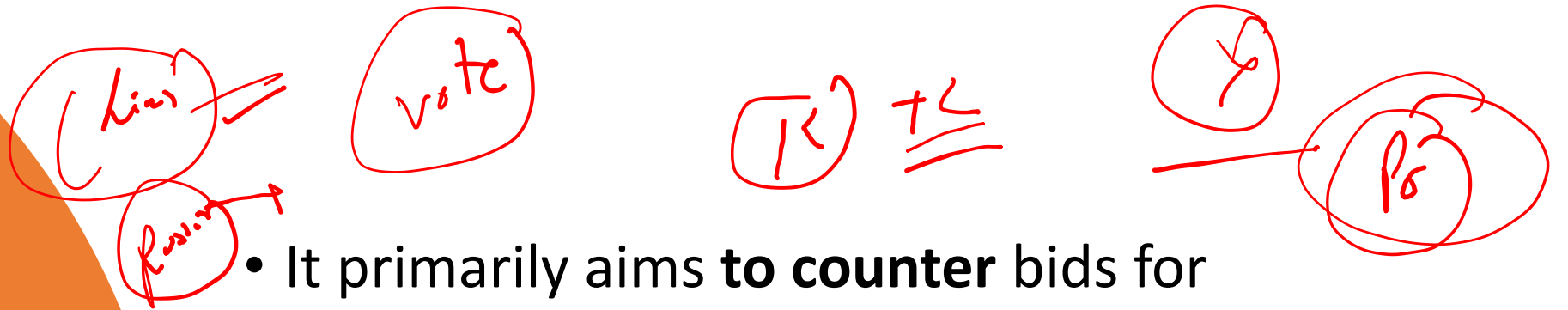
- The territorial waters of India extend up to **12 nautical miles** from the baseline. Within this zone, India exercises **full sovereignty**, and it includes the country's coastal areas and ports.
- **Contiguous Zone (24 Nautical Miles):** Beyond the territorial waters, there is a contiguous zone that extends an additional 12 nautical miles. In this zone, India can take action to prevent or punish infringements on customs, fiscal, immigration, or sanitary laws within its territory or territorial sea.
- **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** The EEZ extends up to 200 nautical miles from the baseline. Within this zone, India has the exclusive rights for exploring, exploiting, conserving, and managing natural resources, such as fisheries and hydrocarbons.



Uniting for Consensus Model

h4 - UNSC - (P5)

- Recently, India criticised the **Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Model** at the **United Nations** for opposing reforms to the Security Council.
- **About the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Model:**
- It is a significant initiative at the United Nations (UN) which was **initiated by Italy in the 1990s**.
- It is also known as the '**Coffee Club**' that comprises **12 member countries** (~~Argentina~~, *Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Spain, and Turkiye*) and **2 observers** (*China and Indonesia*).




- It primarily aims **to counter** bids for permanent seats in the United Nations Security Council by **G4 nations – India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan.**

- **The UfC Model and Its Criticism**


- **UfC** proposes a Security Council with 26 seats, with an **increase only in the non-permanent, elected members.**



Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Startup Forum

- 
- Beijing
- The fourth edition of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Startup Forum was organized in New Delhi.

- **About**

- The initiative focused on broadening startup interactions among the SCO Member States.
 - It will provide value to startups through mentoring and enabling access to investor and corporate engagement activities.
- 

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

The SCO is an intergovernmental organization founded in 2001 with six members.

Objective: To enhance regional cooperation for efforts to curb terrorism, separatism, and extremism in the Central Asian region.

Members: China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Iran.

Secretariat: Beijing



Official languages: Russian and Chinese.

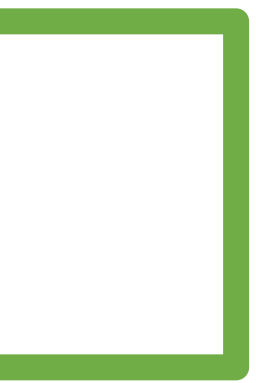
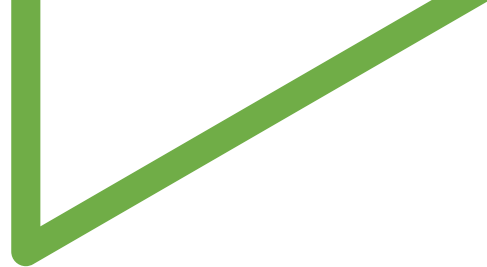
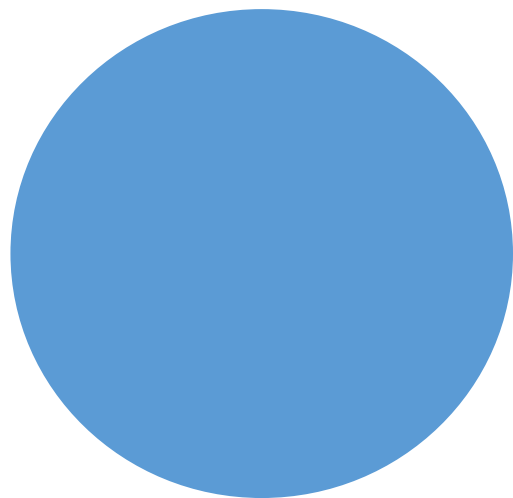


Observer status: Afghanistan, Belarus and Mongolia.



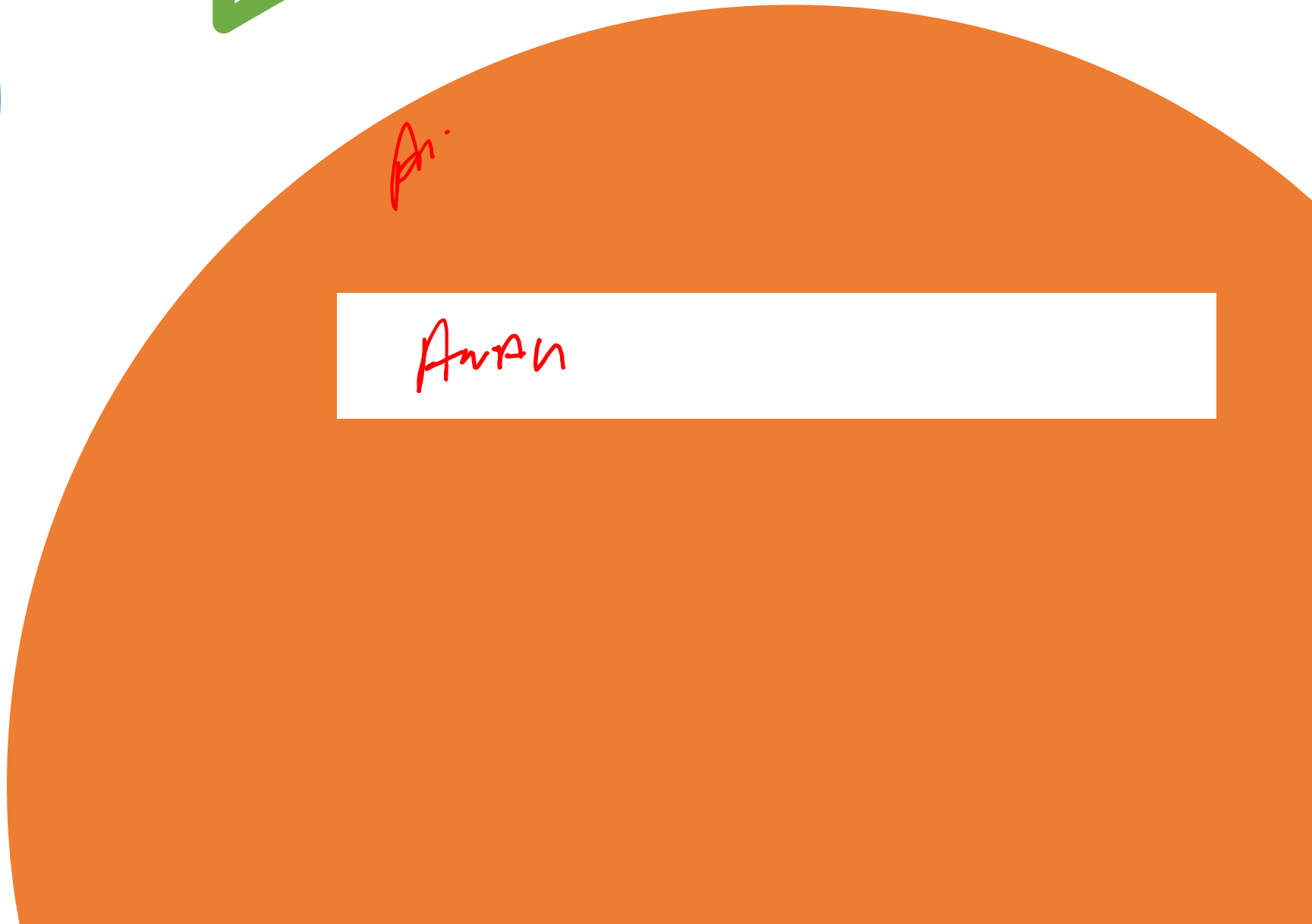
The SCO has been an observer in the UN General Assembly since **2005**.






An.

AnAn



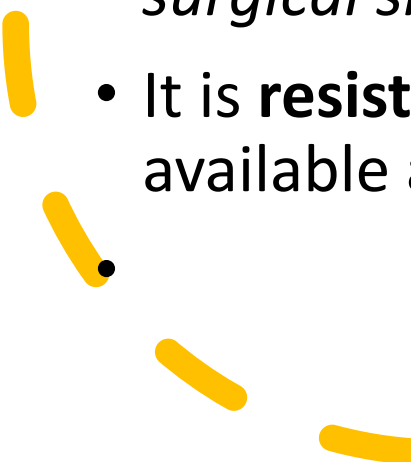
- 
- Recently, the **Technology Development Board (TDB)** of the Department of Science & Technology and others sanctioned the **'Project ANAGRANINF'** for the development of a novel class of antibiotics **against gram-negative bacterial-infections.**
 - This initiative aims to foster healthcare innovation through a joint effort between Indian and Spanish companies.



-



- **About Gram-Negative Bacteria**

- It has built-in abilities to find new ways to be resistant and can pass along genetic materials that allow other bacteria to become drug-resistant as well.
 - It causes infections including *pneumonia, bloodstream infections, wound or surgical site infections, and meningitis* in healthcare settings.
 - It is **resistant to multiple drugs** and is increasingly resistant to most available antibiotics.
- 

- **Threat:**
- Gram-negative bacteria, such as **Acinetobacter Baumannii and Pseudomonas Aeruginosa**, are associated with severe hospital-acquired infections.
- These bacteria have been acknowledged as ‘red alert’ pathogens due to their exceptional ability to develop resistance to all currently available antibiotics.
-

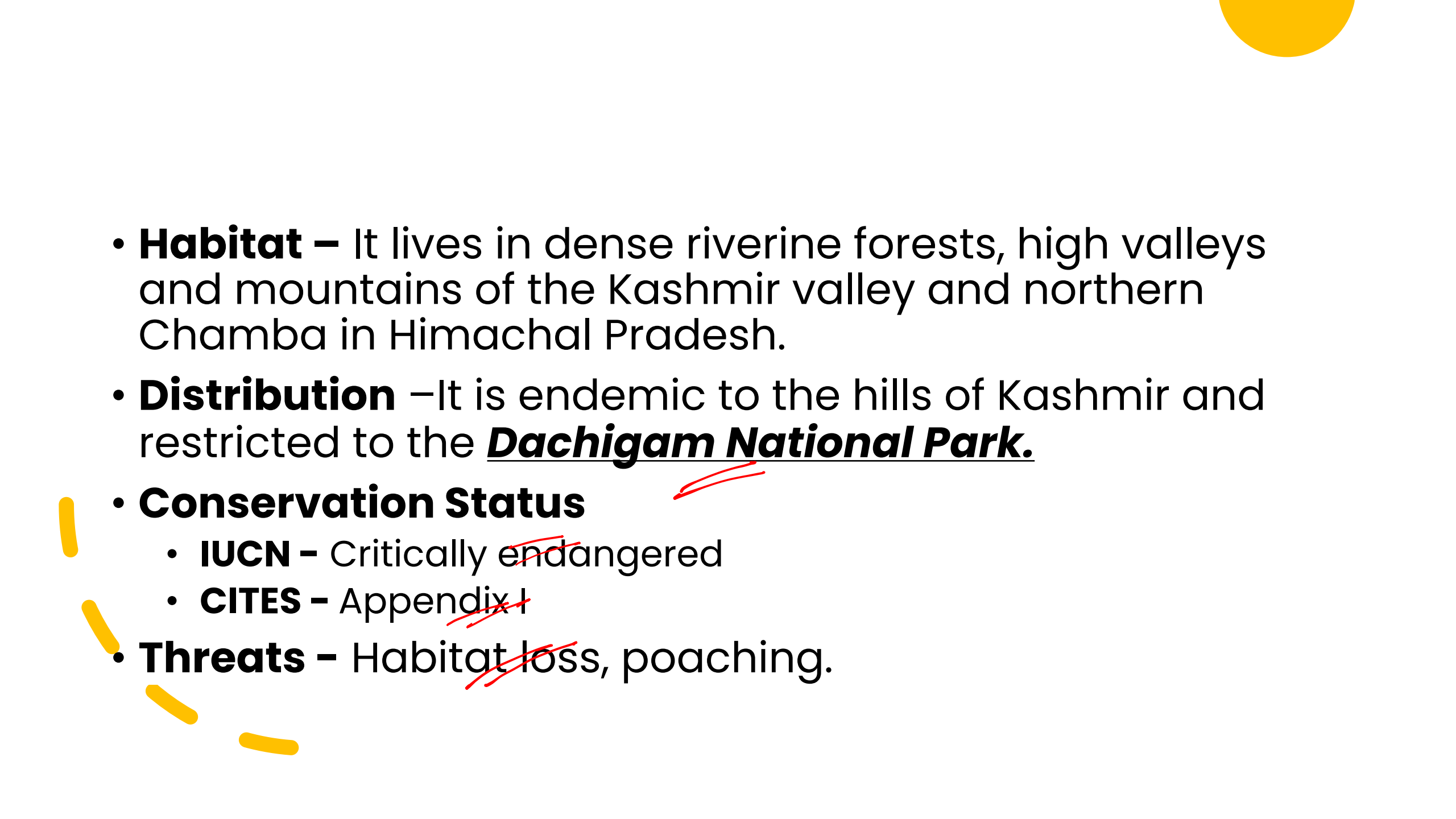
Parameter	Gram-positive bacteria	Gram-negative bacteria
Cell Wall	A <u>single-layered, smooth cell wall</u>	A <u>double-layered, wavy cell-wall</u>
Cell Wall thickness	The <u>thickness of the cell wall</u> is 20 to 80 nanometres	The <u>thickness of the cell wall</u> is 8 to 10 nanometres
Peptidoglycan Layer	It is a <u>thick layer/</u> also can be multi-layered.	It is a <u>thin layer/</u> often single-layered.
Teichoic acids	<u>Teichoic acids</u> are present.	Teichoic acids are not present.
Lipopolysaccharide	Lipopolysaccharide is not present.	Lipopolysaccharide is present.
Outer membrane	The outer membrane is <u>not present.</u>	<u>The outer membrane</u> is mostly present.
Lipid content	The Lipid content is <u>very low.</u>	<u>The Lipid content</u> is 20% to 30%.
Resistance to Antibiotic	These are very <u>susceptible</u> to antibiotics.	These are very <u>resistant</u> <u>to antibiotics.</u>

Kashmir's Hangul (*Cervus hanglu hangul*)

- *Despite conservation efforts, Kashmir's hangul deer risk is facing extinction.*
- **About** - It is also known as the Kashmir stag or Kashmiri red stag which is highly shy and sensitive animal.
- It is the only Asiatic survivor or sub-species of the European red deer.
- **State animal** - It is the **State animal of Jammu and Kashmir**.

•



- 
- **Habitat** – It lives in dense riverine forests, high valleys and mountains of the Kashmir valley and northern Chamba in Himachal Pradesh.
 - **Distribution** –It is endemic to the hills of Kashmir and restricted to the ***Dachigam National Park.***
 - **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN** – Critically ~~endangered~~
 - **CITES** – Appendix I
 - **Threats** – Habitat ~~loss~~, poaching.

CURRENT AFFAIRS



COMPLETE GK/GS COURSE

By Bhunesh Sir

- ✓ UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE 2 YEARS (2023 + 2024) CURRENT AFFAIRS
- ✓ COMPLETE NOTES (PDF)
- ✓ 360° DEGREE EXAMS COVERED

~~₹1999/-~~ ₹799/-

OFFER DATE -
25th TO 26th March

USE CODE - **B60**



CLASS24

By Bhunesh Sir

- ✓ STATIC GK
- ✓ HISTORY
- ✓ POLITY
- ✓ GEOGRAPHY
- ✓ ECONOMICS
- ✓ SCIENCE

OFFER DATE -
25th TO 26th
March

~~₹1999/-~~ ₹799/-

USE CODE - **B60**



RPSC PROGRAMMER

FEATURES

- ✓ UPDATED SYLLABUS COVERAGE
- ✓ COMPLETE ROADMAP
- ✓ NOTES (PDF)
- ✓ LIVE + RECORDED
- ✓ DOUBT SESSION
- ✓ COMPLETE PYQS PRACTICE (NET & GATE)
- ✓ LIVE INTERACTIVE CLASSES

OFFER DATE:

25th - 26th MARCH

60% OFF

**USE CODE-
HOLI**

~~₹9999/-~~ **₹4000/-**

HAPPY

HOLI



Skill24 ₹59999

SOFTWARE ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

- Duration: 6 Months
- Live Online
- Student Handouts
- Industrial Projects
- 100% Career Assistance
- Industry Based Trainers

Software Engineering Course

Skill24 ₹59999

CYBER SECURITY PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

- Duration: 6 Months
- Live Online
- Student Handouts
- Industrial Projects
- 100% Career Assistance
- Industry Based Trainers

Cyber Security Course

Skill24 ₹59999

DATA SCIENCE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

- Duration: 6 Months
- Live Online
- Student Handouts
- Industrial Projects
- 100% Career Assistance
- Industry Based Trainers

Data Science Course

Skill24 ₹59999

BLOCKCHAIN PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

- Duration: 6 Months
- Live Online
- Student Handouts
- Industrial Projects
- 100% Career Assistance
- Industry Based Trainers

Blockchain Course

Skill24 ₹20999

LET'S START TO LEARN SALESFORCE

Salesforce Admin

Salesforce Admin Course

Skill24 ₹20999

LET'S START TO LEARN SALESFORCE

Lightning Web Components

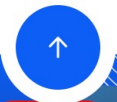
Salesforce LWC Course


Skill24 ₹14999

Skill24 ₹3999

MAKE YOUR BUSINESS THE NEXT UNICORN WITH THE

Skill24 ₹9499





Thank you
guys.

