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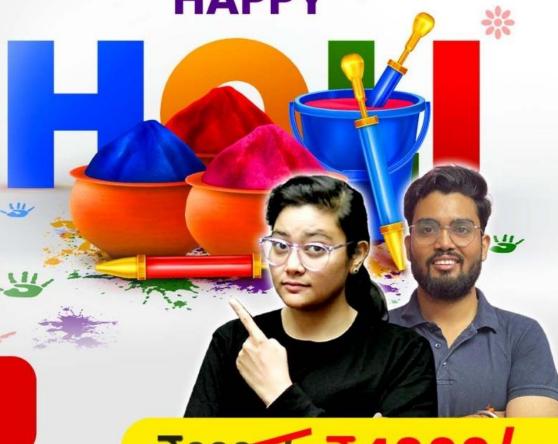
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Perform your obligatory duty, because action is indeed better than inaction.



Bhagavad Gita







Water levels less than 25% in major dams Worrying signs as the summer sets in NION » PAGE 9



Super Kings face the Titans test



Ukrainian FM invokes Candhi for India backing

NEW DELHI

The Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Dmytro Kuleba, said on Monday that supporting Ukraine's cause translates into supporting Gandhian ideals, freedom and independence The Minister also announced in a recorded video message that he will be visiting India this week, » PAGE 4

Ex-BJP MLA to take on Speaker Birla for Cong.

NEW DELHI Former BJP MLA Prahlad Gurnjal, who recently joined the Congress, will take on outgoing Lok Sabha Speaker Orn Birla in Rajasthan's Kota, as the party amounced its sight list of announced its sixth list of candidates on Monday. With five names in the fresh list, the Congress has so far announced 190 candidates. » PAGE 5

Jaishankar calls on Singapore PM, discusses ties

SENGAPORE:
External Affairs Minister S.
Jaishankar on Monday called
on Singapore Prime Minister
Lee Hsien Loong, Foreign
Minister Vivian Balakrishnan,
and other Ministers and
discussed ways to further the
bilateral ties, and the situation
in the Indo-Pacific and West
Asia regions. 39 PAGE 6

Four accused of Moscow attack held in custody

Russia has ordered four men accused of killing at least 137 people in a massacre at a Moscow concert hall to be held in custody on "terror" charges. The men face life in prison, but officials have clamoured for the lifting of a morator

United Nations calls for ceasefire in Gaza during month of Ramzan

The Security Council passes resolution 14-0 after the U.S. abstains from voting; Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu cancels high-level delegation's Washington visit, accuses the U.S. of 'retreating' from a 'principled position' by allowing vote to pass

for an expected ground in-vasion of the strategic Gaza town of Rafah, where over I million Palestinian civi-lians have sought shelter from the war.

"consistent" in its support

he United Nations Security Council on Monday issued its first demand to halt the its first demand to halt the fighting in Gaza, calling for a ceasefire during the Mus-lim holy month of Ramzan in a vote that drew an im-mediate protest from the Israell Prime Minister.

Israeli Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu cancelled a
ton by a high-level delegation and accused the U.S.
of "retreating" from a
"principled position" by abwithout conditioning the
ceasefire on the release of
hostages held by Hamas.

The resolution passed
out to use its veto power
dot to use its veto power

not to use its veto power and instead abstained on the resolution, which also



The vote comes after Russia and China vetoed a U.S. sponsored ceasefire resolution on Friday, AFP

demanded the release of all hostages taken captive during Hamas' October 7 surprise attack in southern Israel. But the measure does not link that demand

The Israeli delegation was to present White House officials with plans hostage deal. "The reason we abstained is because this resolution text did not condemn Hamas," Mr. Kir-by said.

The vote comes after Russia and China vetoed a Russia and China vetoed a U.S.-sponsored resolution on Friday that would have supported "an immediate and sustained ceasefire" in the Israeli-Hamas conflict.

'Could hurt talks'
The U.S. warned that the resolution approved on resolution approved on the country of the co

U.S. reasoning White House national se-curity spokesman John Kir-by said the U.S. had been Health Ministry. Because Ramzan ends demand would last for just two weeks, though the draft says the pause in fighting should lead "to a permanent sustainable

Monday's resolution, put forward by the 10 elected council members,

elected council members, was backed by Russia and China and the 22-nation Arab Group at the UN. Arab Croup at the UN. State of the Council thanked the council for "fi-rally" demanding a company of the Council of the Mary which the Council of the Council of the Council of the Mary which the Council of the Mary which the Council of the Mary which the Council of the Council of the Mary which the Council of the Council of the Mary which the Council of the Council of the Council of the Mary which the Council of the

the word "permanent" from its demand that a Ramzan cease-fire will lead to "a permanent sustainable cease-fire," apparently at the request of the U.S.

14 injured in fire at Mahakal Temple in Madhva Pradesh



adhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav visits people injured i

Press Trust of India

Fourteen priests were in-jured in a fire that broke out at Mahakal Temple in Ujjain town of Madhya Pra-desh on Monday. The blaze took place in

the sanctum sanctorum of the temple at 5.50 a.m., Uj-jain Collector Neeraj Ku-mar Singh said.

mar Singh said.

"Fourteen priests suffered burns. Some are being treated in the district hospital here, while eight have sought treatment in Indore. A magisterial

probe has been ordered in to the incident," Mr. Single said. "The fire started as

said. "The fire started as guitan! (coloured powder) fell on the pujo thail (ritual) plate) that contained burn-ing camphor. It later camphor is later to a blaze," he added. In a post on X, Prime Mi-nister Narendra Modl said: "The incident that hap-pened in Mahakal temple pened in Mahakal temple to cal administration is engaged in every possible engaged in every possible engaged in every possible help to the victims under

the supervision of the state government."

Rapture and relief



EU probe into tech giants for 'violation' of new law may trigger hefty fines

The European Union, on Monday, launched probes into whether Apple, Alphabet and Meta violated a new law, the Digital Marlets Act (DMA), in what is the latest instance of governments trying to exercise wreater control ower. ise greater control over cise greater control over the functioning of big tech companies. The compa-nies could be fined up to 10% of their global reve-nues and 20% for repeat infringements of the DMA.

The announcement of he investigations come the investigations comes just over three weeks after the bloc fined Apple more than £1.84 million (USD 2 billion) for anti-competi-tive behaviour in the martive behaviour in the mar-ket for the distribution of streaming music apps. The U.S. Department of Justice filed a case against Apple last week for allegedly sti-fling competition and keeping prices high in the

nartphone market. The DMA fully came in-effect on March 7 and seeks to regulate large on-line companies called 'ga-tekeepers', whose protekeepers', whose pro-ducts and services are used by some 450 million EU users. The DMA had deignated six 'gatekeepers' n September last year: Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, ByteDance (owners of Tik-

ByteDance (owners of Tik-rok), Meta and Microsoft. Two of the five an numeed of the five and the five and the five and Apple's alleged "anti-steer-ing" practices, the EU's competition commissioner Margrethe Vestager said, as she explained the provi-market. Commissioner

Under lens What do the EU probe



Thierry Breton at a press conference in Brussels. The Commission will in-companies are preventing app manufacturers from directly communicating and contracting with end-users and thereby restrict-ing user choice.

Question of choice The third probe is about whether Apple allows its users enough choice, in-cluding in terms of ease of uninstalling apps and changing default settings. Of particular concern was that the web browser choice screen deprived end users of making fully informed choices, Ms Ves-tager said. Apple also did tager said. Apple also did not make several of its apps, such as 'Photos' un-installable and prevents us-ers from changing their de-fault status (e.g. Cloud), as required by the DMA, she added.

Apple said it was "confi-dent" its plan complied with the DMA. "Teams across Apple

have created a wide range of new developer capabili-ties, features, and tools to comply with the regula-tion," an Apple spokesper-son told *The Hindu* via email.

ers have to pay if they want to use Facebook and Insta-gram without targeted ad-

"But the DMA is very clear: gatekeepers must obtain users' consent to use their personal data across different services. And this consent must be free," he said. The fifth inquiry is into whether Alphabet (Goo-

whether Alphabet (Goo-gle's parent company) is prioritising its own servic-es in Google Search. Mr Google Shopping, Google Flights, and Google Hotels, possibly benefitting from preferential treatment. The investigation is scheduled to be completed

Will Sangh Parivar renounce 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai': Pinarayi

Kerala Chief Minister Pina-rayi Vijayan has challenged the Sangh Parivar to renounce their slogan Bharat Mata Ki Jai because it was coined by a Muslim.

"It was Azimullah Khan, a Muslim, who first raised the slogan 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'. The Sangh Parivar followers are not aware of that. Will they be ready to that. Will they be ready to renounce that slogan berenounce that slogan bemines and the slogan beMusilim?" the Chief Minister said while addressing arally against the Citizen(CAA) organised by the CPI
(M) here on Monday.

Azimullah, Khan, who

CM (

was a strategist in the first war of Indian Indepen-dence, was credited to have first raised the call for motherland when he used the slogan "Madar-e-watan, Bharat ki lai" in 1857.

Second-class citizens The Chief Minister said that the Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh (RSS) was fo-cusing on Muslims with the objective of turning them into second-class citizens.

that Congress leader Rahul



wards the anti-CAA protests.
The Congress had main-tained a criminal silence when protests were furning against the CAA, he said. The Chief Minister said

Gandhi had gone abroad at the crucial time of the CAA protests. "The Congress did not take part in the an-ti-CAA protests with sincer-ity," he said. Annie Raja, V. Vaseef and K.S. Hamza, Left Democratic Front can-didates in Wayanad, Ma-Gandhi had gone abroad at

Commission against the Chief Minister for alleged violation of the Model religion during his election empaign. In a letter sent to the In a letter sent to the Chief Election Commis-sioner, he alleged that a ral-ly taken out by the CPE(M) at Malappuram on Monday was with the intention of instilling fear and hatred in the Muslim community, es-pecially during Ramzan.

Understanding what the right to equality promises

he rules of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, were ecently notified. This law has recently notified. This law has been challenged before the Supreme Court on the grounds that it violates Article 14 of the Constitution. Both opposition to key aspect of this case. This is and a key aspect of this case. This is an opportunity for the Court to fundamentally reshape not just the citizenship law, but also the way in which it judges alleged violations of the constitutional guarantee of equality.

The classification test The classical test to judge these violations is the 'reasonable violations is the 'reasonable clastification' test, where the Court asks whether there is a clear way to differentiate members of one class from another, and then whether there is a clear relation between making this distinction and achieving the goal that the government wishes to achieve. When the Bill was being debated in Parliament, the Home Minister had declared that it was consisten with the test given above - it applied to persecuted minorities who had fled to India from geographically connected nations and the purpose was to provide these minorities with full tnese minorities with full citizenship rights in India. His argument is not legally unsound. One could, of course, argue that the 'persecuted minorities' the 'persecuted minorities' argument ought to extend to, say, the Ahmadiyya Maslims in Palcistan as well. This would ordinarily be fatal to the Home Minister's argument. But the Court has generally allowed a great deal of latitude to the state while dealing with a potential equality law violation. In Charanjit Lal Chowdhury v. Union of India Chowdhury v. Union of India (1950), for instance, the Court declared that "the Legislature is free to recognise degrees of harm and it may confine its restrictions to those cases where the harm is deemed to be the clearest." If we go by this standard, the CAA might onetitutional And that is



Aditya Phalnikar is a Research Fellow at the Vidhi Centre fo Legal Policy. Views expressed are personal

The Court has an opportunity

to reshape not just the citizenship law,

but also the way

violations of our constitutional

judges alleged

guarantee of

The classification test is a judicial import from the U.S. dating back to 1950. It has since developed, and critiqued to the point where it has become an jurisprudence, Indeed, from being a way of interpreting our equality guarantee, it has almost become with the court employs to decide what country to the court employs to decide what the Court employs the Constitution, however, is not force Equality is a moving target,

the test; it is what the test is used for. Equality is a moving target, and the reasonable classification test was developed to hit it most accurately. But this does not always happen. The CAA may pas this test, and yet not satisfy our constitutional conscience. The source of our pain is the fact that there are some persecuted there are some persecuted minorities who are excluded for no apparent reason. This is unsettling also because the discrimination here is on the basis of religion, which is against any understanding of secularism.

The classification test, in its

most repeated form, does not

necessarily account for any of this. This is not to say that it never can. This is not to say that if never can.
While reading down Section 377 of
the Indian Penal Code, Justice D.Y.
Chandrachud, as he was then,
stated that Article 14 contains "a stated that Article 14 contains "a powerful statement of values", and that to "reduce it to a formal exercise of classification may miss the true value of equality". Other judges have also attempted to augment the classification test with more teeth. But these responses are stopgap. The test is either bent to suit more just outcomes, or a new test is developed. The 'manifest arbitrariness' test developed by the Court in recent cases is a response of the latter kind, and is unfortunately too broad to provide any concrete guidance. Unlike the reasonable classification test, it has no shape or form. The most

content of this test is that what is "without adequate determining policy or principle" is manifestly to the face of fit, susceptible to multiple interpretations – hardly a suitable fit for a judicial test which is supposed to crystallise an exposed to crystallise an comprehensive re-understanding of what the right to equality promises. This does not needs erasure, but it needs a

necessarily mean that the old test needs erasure, but it needs a radical redevelopment. The Court redecided redevelopment is needs a radical redevelopment. The Court redecided redevelopment of the redecided redecided

who have come from each of these countries (from each religion). Each of these will test the state's purported justifications against the new idea of equality. These questions may be asked in the classification test as well, but are classification test as well, but are not its core components. Their application depends upon active values flowing from Article 14. Leaving crucial questions of constitutional law open to such discretion is incorrect. This is the core of the problem.

Opportunity for a clear break The legal and constitutional challenge to CAA is a timely challenge to CAA is a timely opportunity for this task because opportunity for this task because the construction of the const

The LDF's big weapon against the UDF

The anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act debates have given the Left Front a boost

S.R. Praveen

n March II, when the Union government notified the rules for the implementation of the Ci-tizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, just days ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, there was little doubt about its real intent. While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with an eye on votes, proudly owned the move, the reaction of its Kera-la unit has been muted given

la unit has been muted given the significant minority population in the State. Front (LDF) in Kerala was quick to criticise the CAA and place itself as the bulwark control of the CAA and place itself as the bulwark control of the CAA and place itself as the bulwark control of the CAA and place itself as the control of the CAA and place itself as the CAA and place ification a diversion from the electoral bonds issue. While the LDF government reiterat-ed that the CAA and the National Register of Citizens will not be implemented in Kerala. Kerala Pradesh Congress Com-mittee president K. Sudhaka-ran said that the CAA will be "thrown into the Arabian Sea"

"thrown into the Arabian Sea" If INDIA comes to power.

All of a sudden, every other LDF's campaign over the Union government's alleged financial embarge of Kerala or plaints about the State government, seem to have been pushed to the background with the CAA taking the spotlight. Over the past week, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has addressed anti-CAA rallies in various districts. The UDF has also been organising protest marches, especially in the northern districts, which

have a higher concentration of

minorities.

The State government has also moved the Supreme Court seeking an injunction against the implementation of the CAA, saying it will lead to hostile discrimination. Mr. Vihostile discrimination. Mr. Vi-jayan, who has branded the law a challenge to the very idea of India, has portrayed it as part of the Sangh Parivar's long-time agenda of turning Muslims into second-class citi-zens by taking away their basic rights. He has also lashed out at the Congress saying the parrights. He has also lashed out at the Congress saying the par-ty had not put up sufficient re-sistance against the Citizen-ship (Amendment) Bill in Parliament and outside.

In December 2019, at the beginning of the anti-CAA movement, Mr. Vijayan and Ramesh Chennithala, who

draw the cases registered against people, numbering most people, numbering and control of the control of the control of the control of the cases were quashed by the cases were quashed by the cases were quashed by the cases were quashed to withdraw 84 others. The only cases that have not been withdrawn are those involving state of the control of the case of the cas

BJP State President K. Su-rendran believes that the with-drawal of cases against antidrawal of cases against anti-CAA protesters is part of the LDP's attempts at minority ap-planning to approach the Election Commission of India over the alleged of obsect in withdrawing these cases. Mr. Surrendran has reiterated the mount in the case of the case of the deep citizenship to appraise.

deny citizenship to any particular community.

The debate is expected to have a bearing on the voting patterns of the State's minorihave a bearing on the woting to population. For the LDF, the anti-CAA debates have helped push to the sidelines states are the sidelines of th movement. Mr. Vijayan and was the Opposition is leader, the delta a joint protest. The Kerala Assembly had also undership had been against the Bill. But since then, the INDIA bloc partners desure the Chief Minister of such that Congress was accused the Chief Minister of susceptible had been such that Congress was asserted that Congress was asserted that Congress was asserted that Congress leaders to the Bill. But the ChA and only a Congress-led little role in implementing the CAA and only a Congress-led Bill but the CAA and only a Congress-led Gandhi's candidature from Candhi's Candhi's Candidature from Candhi's Candhi's Candhi's Candhi's Candhi's Candhi'

Water levels less than 25% in many major dams in the south

With most major dams in the State filled to close to 50% of their capacity, Kerala is the only exception

DATA POINT

Rebecca Rose Varghese

ost of the major reser-voirs in the southern States of Karnataka, Ta-mil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and And Needs age of the broaden, and Telangana are filled to only 25% of their capacity or less. This is worrying as peak summer is round the their capacity or less and the their capacity of their capacity. Other large dama border are pacity. Other large dams such as Mettur in Tamil Nadu and Srisailam on the Andhra Pradesh Telangana border are pacity. Other large dams such as Mettur in Tamil Nadu and Srisailam on the Andhra Pradesh Telanton and their capacity. The water crisis in Bengaluru may soon hit other urban centres and rural the following days.

the following days.
Across India, the current water Across India, the current water level in 150 primary reservoirs put together as a share of their total ca-together as a share of their total ca-together as a share of the Little of the Little of the Commission. Chart I shows a region-wise comparison of the current storage levels as a share of the total capacities of reservoirs. It also compares the cur-rent water levels with last year's le-vels, as well as with the 10-year

average.
The chart shows that the southern region is impacted the most. All the reservoirs put together are filled to only 23% of their capacity in this region, which is about 17% points lower than the levels repoints lower than the levels re-corded last year and 9 points lower than the 10-year average. No other region — central, west, east, or north – shows such a drastic diffe-year as well as the 10-year average. For instance, in the northern and central regions, the reservoirs are filled to 33% and 46% of their ca-pacities, respectively, similar to and Kakkir eservoirs in Kerala too record-pacities, respectively, similar to deficient rainfail during the shown in Table 6.

gion, the reservoirs are filled to 45% of their capacity, slightly high-

goon, the reservours are filled toeer than their IO-year average,
while the 49% recorded in the eastern region was only marginally.
Among the southern States, a
comparison of the capacities of individual reservoirs with their curvels in many are dangerously low.
Charts 2, 3, and 4 show the current storage levels as a share of thevels in many are dangerously low.
Andhra Pradesh-Telangana, Karnataka and Tanuli Nadu. The list is
served by the Central Water Commission in these States.
The Linganamaki reservoir in
The Linganamaki reservoir in
the control of the control of the conmission in these States.

crore litres of water, is currently filled to just 22%. The Supa reser-voir in Karnataka's Uttara Kannada

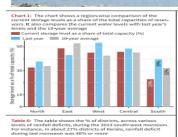
voir in Karnataka's Uttara Kannada district, with a total capacity of 4.1 lakh crore litres, is filled to only 36%. The Tungabhadra dami n'vi-yation and the state of the state of the with a total capacity of 3.2 lakh crore litres, is filled to only 5%. The Srisailam reservoir on the Andhra Pradesh'relangana bor-Andhra Pradesh'relangana to-tal control of the state of the same litres, is filled to only 15%, whereas the Nagarjuna Sagar dam on the same border, with a capacity of 5.1 lakh crore litres, is filled to a mere

1%. The Mettur dam in Salem dis rict of Tamil Nadu, with a full ca-pacity of 2.65 lakh crore litres, is filled to 28%. Kerala is the only exception

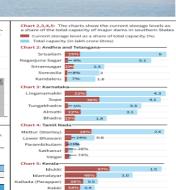
Keraia is the only exception among the southern States, with most of its major dams filled to at least 50% of their capacities, as shown in Chart 5. The Idukki re-

In troubled waters





10									
North	East	v	West	Central	South				
Table 6: The table shows the % of districts, across various evels of rainfall deficits, during the 2023 south-west monsoon. For instance, in about 27% districts of Kerala, rainfall deficit during last monsoon was 40% or more									
		Def			No				
State	40% or more	25%- 40%	15%- 25%	<15%	No deficit				
State		25%-	15%-	<15% 21%					
	more	25%- 40%	15%- 25%		deficit				
Andhra	more 5%	25%- 40% 5%	15%- 25% 32%	2196	deficit 37%				
Andhra Karnataka	5% 6%	25%- 40% 5% 13%	15%- 25% 32% 48%	21% 26%	deficit 37%				
Andhra Karnataka Kerala	more 5% 6% 27%	25%- 40% 5% 13% 20%	15%- 25% 32% 48% 40%	21% 26% 13%	37% 5%				



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Mindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 26, 1974

Base in Indian Ocean will create tension'

Madras, March 25: Vice-Admiral K.L. Kulkarni Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, said here to-day that the Navail Command, said here to-day that the Indian Ocean had been deciared an area of supported it. If the super-powers and the regional powers patrolled this area, "certainly there will be a lot of tension, and we will be very "The Vice-Admiral told a press conference that the Government of India's policy was quite clear on this issue, in that the Indian Ocean should be

a zone of peace.

Replying to a question, the Vice-Admiral said:
"Diego Garcia does not directly affect our
defence capabilities. It does affect, if tensions
leaded to the control of the control of the control
selection of the control
s with the latest sophisticated weapons, and in the context of the geographical situation in which India is placed, it will certainly affect us.

which India is placed, it will certainly affect us."
The Vice-Admiral pointed out that France and
the Soviet Union had stated that they would
send their ships to cruise in the Indian Ocean.
The Vice-Admiral said the Andaman and
Nicobar Islands were the "eastern sentine" of
the country and "their defence is my mujor
the said negotiations were in an advanced
stage regarding collaboration arrangements with
certain foreign countries to build patrol boats.
Once the decision was taken, the Mazagon
building these boats.

Docks at bonney wound no entrusted with building these boats. Replying to questions he said a new era of naval aviation would be developed in the 1980s. The Indian Navy's aircraft carrier was certainly not out-dated. "What we need is modern types of aircraft that can be deployed from the ship," he added.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 26, 1924 Steel pipes for Tatas

London, Mar. 25: An order which is stated to be the biggest of its kind ever placed in Britain and perhaps in the world has been lodged with the British Mannesmann Tube Company for steel and the british Mannesmann Tube Tompany for steel with the Tata Hydroelectric Scheme.

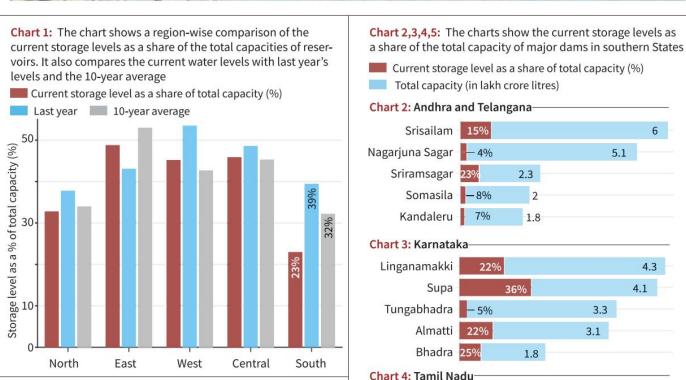
Water levels less than 25% in many major dams in the south

With most major dams in the State filled to close to 50% of their capacity, Kerala is the only exception

In troubled waters

The data for the charts were sourced from the latest weekly bulletin published by the Central Water Commission



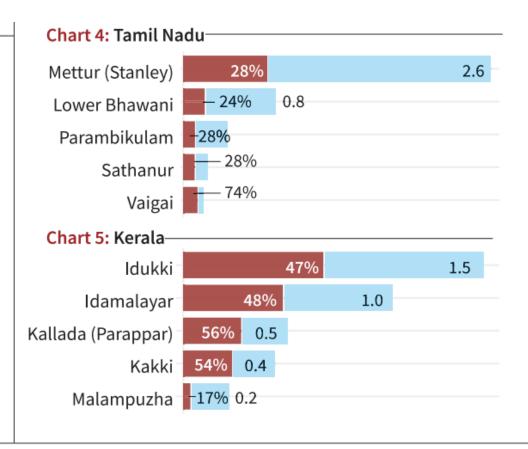


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4.3 4.1

Table 6: The table shows the % of districts, across various levels of rainfall deficits, during the 2023 south-west monsoon. For instance, in about 27% districts of Kerala, rainfall deficit during last monsoon was 40% or more

		No			
State	40% or more	25%- 40%	15%- 25%	<15%	deficit
Andhra	5%	5%	32%	21%	37%
Karnataka	6%	13%	48%	26%	6%
Kerala	27%	20%	40%	13%	-
Tamil Nadu	3%	11%	13%	16%	58%
Telangana	-	7%	2%	27%	63%





Boeing CEO David Calhoun to step down; Stan Deal to retire

Boeing CEO David Calhoun will step down from the embattled plane maker at the end of the year as part of a broader management shake-up after a series of mishaps at one of America's most storled manufacturers. Stan Deal, president and CEO of Boeing's commercial airplanes unit, will retire immediately, while Stephanie Pope, the chief operating officer, will lead the division. The company said board chairman Lawrence Kellner does not plan to stand for re-election in May. «

JSL, IIT-Kharagpur partner to work on metallurgical projects

findal Stainless Ltd. and IFT Kharagnur will jointly junda okamenluri, aita projectirilingprimarya liby production and materials characterisation. It is an industry-academia collaboration, under which the premier educational institution will offer technical and operational solutions, Jindal Stainless Ltd. (JSL) said. The collaboration will Stainless Ltd. (JSL) said. The collaboration will work together on metallurgical projects, such as process optimisation, materials characterisation and primary alloy production, it said. PTI

BYD rolls out 7 millionth unit of its electric vehicle in China

BYD, a leading manufacturer of electric vehicles and power batteries, on Monday, became the world's first automaker to roll out its seven world's first automaker to roll out its seven millionth EV, the DENZA. NY, which was unwelled at the Jinan factory in China. BYD reached the production of its 1 millionth EV in 2021 and grew threefold within 18 months, and surpassed five million units in nine months. In seven months from this mark, BYD rose to seven million, according to a press release. »

Robusta coffee price touches all-time high amid global shortage

The price of robusta coffee has risen sharply due to a supply shortage

obusta coffee farmers in South India are jubilant post-harvest with their produce fetching an alltime high price.
The farmgate price of raw Robusta coffee berries

touched a record ₹172 per kilogram (kg) in the Wayanad market on Saturday, as against ₹115 per kg during the same period last year. Meanwhile, the spot price of Robusta coffee beans stood at ₹315 per kg, up from ₹210 during the same period in 2023. The price

period in 2023. The price was 880 and 1415 per kg for raw berries and beans, respectively, in March 2022. Though the harvest is almost complete, there has been a huge shortfall in the supply of coffee to the market this year, thereby comributing to the increase for the complete of the property of the complete of the property of the complete the property of the pro

Multiple factors "We expect a decline of 30% in Robusta produc-30% in Robusta produc-tion this year owing to cli-matic vagaries, especially the scanty blossom shower in Robusta-growing re-gions last year," Mr. George said.

A sharp decline in the



has also led to the rise in prices, sources added. Ro-busta coffee production in indonesia too dipped indonesia too dipped Notably, the price of Arabica seeds has dropped below the price of Robusta. The farmagate price of the The farmagate price of the was \$30S per kg on Satur-day. While traditionally the Arabica variety fetched a Robusta Lapita is selling as a Robusta that is selling at a higher price due to its low availability.

Farmers expect produc-tion to decline by 25%-30% next year too owing to a dearth of backup showers in many Robusta coffee-growing regions. Wayanad in Kerala,

which is the largest Robus-ta coffee-producing district in the country after Coorg

rainfall of 29.3 mm in the first week of January. Major parts of the district re-ceived no rain since then, Prasanth Rajesh, Director, Wayanad Coffee Growers' And the January showers The January showers helped in the blossoming of Robusta coffee plants, farmers say, But absence of backup showers, a major berrifes, is a concern.

berries, is a concern. According to the Coffee Board of India, the total

production of coffee in India during the 2022-23 fis-cal was 3,52,000 tonnes, cal was 3,52,000 tonnes, including 2,52,000 tonnes of Robusta coffee. The total value of India's coffee ex-ports has risen to ₹5,279 crore during the ongoing coffee season, from ₹3,982 crore during the same pe-riod in the earlier season.

Google billing: Start-ups said to challenge CCI order

K.R. Srivats NEW DELHI

Start-ups are set to challenge the Competition Commission of India's (CCI's) recent order denving them interim relief dur-ing the pendency of the plea challenging Google's Play Store payment rollicies

policies.
The appeals are likely to be filed before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal in the next few days, sources said.

"Despite [the] CCI finding prima facie contraven-tion against tech giant Goo-



start-ups," they reasoned.

Probe against Google The Commission had last Wednesday rejected start-ups' interim relief applica-tion for complete restraint on Google from collection of fees under tech giant's updated payments policy. This ruling came close

tition watchdog ordering an investigation against Google on March 15 for ex-cessive pricing on Play Store. CCI had then held the tech giant's users choice billing (UCB) pay-ments policy was 'prima facle' violative of the Cometition Act 2002

petition Act 2002.
Shaadi.com, KukuFM
and Indian Broadcasting
and Digital Foundation and
Indian Digital Media Industry Foundation, had urged
the Commission to restain fee for transactions involving paid downloads or in app purchases on apps of

fering services. (The writer is with The

In a first, Amul to introduce fresh milk in U.S. within a week: MD Jayen Mehta

Press Trust of India

For the first time, Amul fresh milk will be available outside India, with the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Mar keting Federation (GCMMF) unveiling four variants of milk in the U.S. market within a week, to cater to the Indian diaspo-

cater to the Indian diaspor a and Asian populations. "We have been export-ing dairy products for ma-ny decades. This is the first time we are launching fresh milk outside India,"



Mehta. He said, "the GCMMF has tied up with 108-year old cooperative organisation Michigan Milk

The milk collection and processing will be done by MMPA, while GCMMF will do marketing and brand-ing of Amul fresh milk. "Recipe will be ours.

Within one week, Amul Taaza, Amul Gold, Amul Shakti and Amul Slim n Trim will be available in the U.S. market," he said. Mr. Mehta said fresh

Mf. Menta sad fresh milk will be available in New York, New Jersey, Chi-cago, Washington, Dallas and Texas among others. He said GCMMF would also introduce products like paneer and curd soon.

Switch Mobility to roll out maiden electric LCV soon

Switch Mobility Ltd. is gearing up to roll out its maiden product in the e-Light Commercial Vehicle (eLCV) segment in the next few days and the second in the next three months, a top company executive said.

said.
"We are going to roll out IeV4 (Intelligent EV) this week from the Hosur plant, while it will take about three months for IeV3's roll out," CEO Mahesh Babu said during an intersection.

interaction.
"FAME-II comes to an end by March 2024. It does not offer subsidy for LCVs. As the buyer has to pay more, we are offering them

Japanese two-wheeler maker India Yamaha Motor

Pvt. Ltd. (IYM) has chalked

out a mid-term plan (MTP) to more than double its ov-

erall market share in India

New products
"We will be announcing the MTP for 2025-27 soon.

plan for setting up a new factory, and a road map for unveiling new products," Yamaha Motor India's Se-

nior Vice President Sales and Marketing Ravinder

to 10% by CY27, said a se-



Mahesh Babu

savings per month w savings per month would be in the region of ₹6,000-9,000 depending on the number of kilometres tra-velled," he said. Switch Mobility had un-

veiled eLCVs (small trucks) IeV3 and IeV4 during Ash-ok Leyland's 75th Anniverok Leyland's 75th Anniver-sary celebrations, and said it had secured pre-book-ings for I3,000 units. The target customers in-

Singh told The Hindu Singh told The Hindu.

"This we will try to
achieve by rolling out motorbikes with higher capacities, targeting first-time
buyers, and young buyers
from urban and semi-urban areas, who want performance oriented and as-

India Yamaha Motor aims to

capture 10% market share by CY27

cluded e-commerce plat-forms and the FMCG

IIT-Madras," Mr. Babu said. With regard to EIV12, he said the company had se-cured orders for 1,300 buses to be executed within a year for various State Tran-sport Corporations.

entering Tier-2 and 3 ci-ties," Mr. Singh said.

The company produces 125cc and 155cc scooters (Fascino, Ray and Aerox)

and premium segment mo-torbikes of 155cc and 321cc

Industry growth
Last year, the industry
grew by 8%, while IYM
India Yamaha Motor has
plants in Chennai and Su-rajpur with a combined
printing of the combined
million units for scooters
and motorbikes. Last year,
the company sold 8.6 lakh
units, of which 2.1 lakh un-

ket share of 15% each.

Industry growth

Manipal's Pai eves Byju's 42% stake in Aakash near FY23

Hamsini Karthik Iyoti Banthia MUMBAI/BENGALURU

Months after taking 40% stake in Bjyu's-owned Aa-kash Educational Services, kash Education and Manipal Education and Medical Group, is said to be readying for a larger stake in the company. Sources said Mr. Pai is eyeing the 42% stake held

by Byju Raveendran and Byju's parent company Think and Learn. He is said to have offered to acquire the stake at Aakash's valua tion of \$700-800 million However, a Byju's spokes-person denied the move. (The writers are with The lindu husinessline)

sell one million units that includes exports of 2.5 lakh units. On exports, he

said scooters and motor-bikes were being shipped

to South American, Afri-can and South Asian coun-

tries. During the current year, IYM will be shipping

cooters to Europe and Ja

Asserting that the com-

FY24 block deals to touch ₹1.7-lakh cr., highs

<mark>Janaki Krishnan</mark> MUMBAI

It is raining block deals and FY24 is set to end with a sizeable total of ₹1.7-lakh crore (\$20 billion worth of the busined crore short of the heights reached in FY23. Till the end of last week deals worth over ₹1.6-lakh crore had been transacted, crore transacted in FY26, according to data provide according to data provide according to data provide according to data provide.

according to data provided to businessline by Prime Database and data on the

In FY23, there were sev In FY23, there were several large block deals in the stocks of the Adami group when the promoter family had sold small stakes in companies in March to GGG Partners.

There are just three trading days this month in this truncated week, boxed in by holidays at the beginning and early and the second of the secon

Block deals trend Block deals have risen over the years as this window has been increasingly used by promoters and privateequity firms to sell large stakes or exit holdings in

In FY2O, block deals were just 852,264 crore, while the next year there will be the control of t year-on-year. (The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

GIC, Blackstone property talks fail over pricing Janaki Krishnan

Talks between the Singa-pore sovereign wealth fund, GiC, and global asset manager Blackstone Inc. of the source of the source of the source same the price the latter had set.

Sources and both the Sources stalked away from the deal as they could not agree on the pricing.

not agree on the pricing.

Blackstone had put on
the block half the stake in

some commercial real es ate assets it owned jointly with Panchshil Group and Salarpuria Sattva at an asking price of \$1.5-2 billion

REIT, only option
This has left Blackstone
with little option but to unveil a REIT for office properties housed under Nucleus Office Parks and the
two loint ventures, sources two joint ventures, sources said. They indicated Black-stone had firmed up plans to unveil a REIT in the re-gion of \$1 billion as public markets are trading better han private markets. Blackstone is in the process of identifying invest-ment bankers to the issue. GIC responded to business ine's request for clarifica

tion in the matter. Last year, businessline reported discussions between the two were under way and a decision would

way and a decision would be taken based on pricing and asset valuation. Singapore-based GIC is one of the few overseas the Indian commercial-realty market. However, it has balked at the asking price of \$1.5-2 billion for the Blackstone properties, the developments said.



The deal would have valued properties at about \$4 billion. Properties that are part of the sale have a leas-able area of 26 million square feet (msf). Projects with Panchshil include Eon Free Zone, Tech Park One Free Zone, Tech Park One, a 415-key JW Marriott ho-tel, and Pavilion Mall. Pro-jects with Salarpuria in Hyderabad that are up for sale are Knowledge City and Knowledge Capital.

Payback pressure
The joint ventures have
been in effect for 7-10 years
and sources said Blackstone is under pressure
from its global inserters for from its global investors for payback. The usual period for investments that priv-ate equity firms like Blackstone follow is 5-7 years af-

through a sale or a listing.

Blackstone owns over
20 msf of commercial as-sets in Nucleus Office sets in Nucleus Office
Parks, Combined with Joint
venture assets, it has over
46 msf. This will be part of
Blackstone's REET portfolio
Till about learner
REET's performance in
stock markets was lacklustre after touching highs
in initial months of listing,
global downturn in the of-

slowdown in the software sector, one of the largest occupiers of office space in India. There has been an uptick in the commercia office sector since. The De cember quarter saw a spurt in office absorption and 2023 ended with gross absorption of close to 60

absorption of close to 60 msf, and is forecast to cross 50 msf this year. Also, REITs have fared better in the markets. Blackstone-owned Nexus Blackstone-owned Nexus Select Trust gained 23% from a 52-week low, while Embassy Office Parks REIT, in which Blackstone was a sponsor and exited in December, surged more than 40%. Market circles said leasing and rentals have risen due to demand-supply dynamics. Global

Capability Centres are continuing to iob flow to India, so the amercial real estate st ry is strong for another 8IO years. For foreign investors wanting to enter India,
REITs have been a success
model to invest and get returns. Hence REIT in the
maintaining control, commitment and also partial
exit is more favourable
than private sale.

(The writer is with The
Hindu businessilne) ry is strong for another 8

Last year, the industry grew by 8%, while I'N M grew by 15%, he said. India Yamaha Motor has plants in Chemnal and Suplants in Chemnal and Suproduction capacity 1.5 million units for scooters and motorbikes. Last year, 23/cc. "We are also planning to roll out higher units, of which 21 labh units to This year, I'N aims to formance oriented and as-pirational products, and by

pan as well.

Robusta coffee price touches all-time high amid global shortage

The price of robusta coffee has risen sharply due to a supply shortage and global factors, surpassing the price of premium arabica coffee

E.M. Manoj KALPETTA

obusta coffee farmers in South India are jubilant post-harvest with their produce fetching an all-time high price.

The farmgate price of raw Robusta coffee berries touched a record ₹172 per kilogram (kg) in the Wayanad market on Saturday, as against ₹115 per kg during the same period last year. Meanwhile, the spot price of Robusta coffee beans stood at ₹315 per kg, up from ₹210 during the same period in 2023. The price was ₹80 and ₹145 per kg for raw berries and beans, respectively, in March 2022.

Though the harvest is almost complete, there has been a huge shortfall in the supply of coffee to the market this year, thereby contributing to the increase in coffee prices, said Salu George, a coffee trader in Wayanad.



Prolonged scarcity: Farmers say production may decline by 25-30% next year too owing to dearth of backup showers. FILE PHOTO

ta coffee-growing country, has also led to the rise in prices, sources added. Robusta coffee production in Indonesia too dipped sharply this year, they said.

Notably, the price of Arabica seeds has dropped below the price of Robusta. The farmgate price of the Arabica variety of coffee was ₹305 per kg on Saturday. While traditionally the Arabica variety fetched a

in Karnataka, received a rainfall of 29.3 mm in the first week of January. Major parts of the district received no rain since then, Prasanth Rajesh, Director, Wayanad Coffee Growers' Association said.

The January showers helped in the blossoming of Robusta coffee plants, farmers say. But absence of backup showers, a major factor in the formation of

Multiple factors

"We expect a decline of 30% in Robusta production this year owing to climatic vagaries, especially the scanty blossom shower in Robusta-growing regions last year," Mr. George said.

A sharp decline in the production of Robusta coffee-nearly 2 million bags-in Vietnam, a major Robus-

premium price, it is now Robusta that is selling at a higher price due to its low availability.

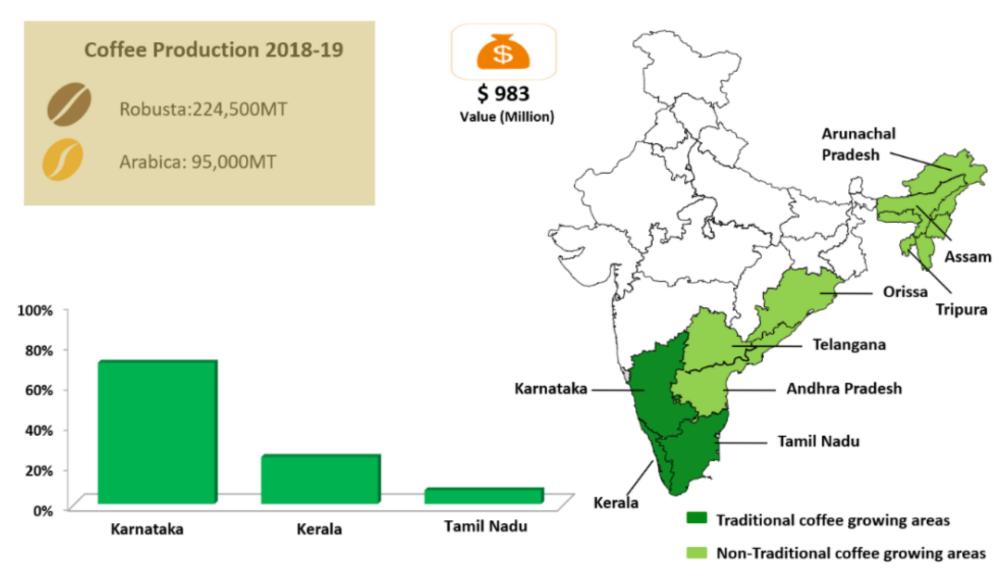
Farmers expect production to decline by 25%-30% next year too owing to a dearth of backup showers in many Robusta coffeegrowing regions.

Wayanad in Kerala, which is the largest Robusta coffee-producing district in the country after Coorg

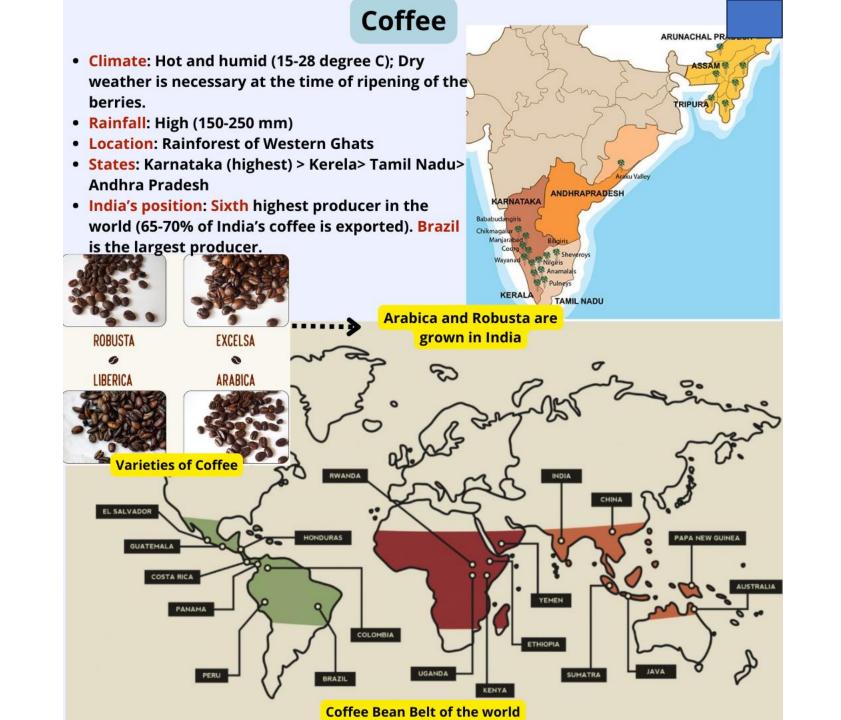
berries, is a concern.

According to the Coffee Board of India, the total production of coffee in India during the 2022-23 fiscal was 3,52,000 tonnes, including 2,52,000 tonnes of Robusta coffee. The total value of India's coffee exports has risen to ₹5,279 crore during the ongoing coffee season, from ₹3,982 crore during the same period in the earlier season.

INDIA COFFEE MARKET-KEY DATA



Source: Coffee Board of India, Wikipedia



Set for take off



Conquering skies: The Xpeng Heitech, an electric flying car, is displayed at the 45th Bangkok International Motor Show. REUTERS

Kejriwal sends first

from ED custody,

direction to his govt

Opp rally on Mar 31

Told us to resolve water scarcity and

prepare for summer: Minister Atishi

NOA



There will be no edition March 26, 2024



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

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



SAJJAD HUSSAIN

der restoring trade ties with

following his participation in the Nuclear Energy Summit in Brassels, Geo News reported. He highlighted the eagerness of cash-strapped Paldistan's busi-ness community to resume trade activities with India. Pakistani businessmen war rrade with India to resume," Dar said Saturday. Pakistan will consider restor-

iblet as saying by the control of the memory paper.

Pakistan downgraded its plomatic ties with New Delhi ther the Indian government abogated Article 370 of the

THE WORLD



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





Industrialist Naveen Jindal at the BJP office in Delhi, Sunday, PTF, 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 Abhjit Gangopadhyay and actor Kangana Ranaut

Sunday, has been fielded from Kurukshetra, Two others who joined the party Sunday and have been handed Lok Sabha tickets are Harvana minister and

RCP MP and MLA Velagapalli party choice for Ghaziabad this Varaprasad Rao (Tirupatt). The Will A and former UP mini Omissions included Minister ster Atul Garg: in Pillibhir, MP of State General V K Singh (re-rired) who announced before unced his resignation on X independent MLA Raniit Singh the release of the list that he buzz that Varun may contest as

ments kicked up a row, ha been dropped; in Meerut, vet-eran leader Rajendra Agrawa

in the Remapartelevision serial.
Kangana Ranaut will be the
BJF Jace from Mandi, for long
considered a Congress baston in
Justice Cangpesal to the Congress of the Congress of

18 'untraceable' monuments from its list of protected sites

NEW DELHI MARCH 24

INTHE first such largescale exer-Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has put out a list of 18 cening to the central agency, they no

ing to the central agency, they no bonger hold national importance. Bonger hold national importance are used to be a superior of the control of the control

Chamba Cemetery in Delhi ner Burkill's Tomb at Gaughat in Lucknow; and Telia Nala Buddhist ruins, which form part of a deserted village in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. Delisting of the monument



Both Prime FTA. Aasaan nahi hai, negotiations abhi baaki hai, mere dost

ALEX ELLIS

Delhi Minister Atishi with other INDIA bloc leaders at a po CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 RELATED REPORTS EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE ASI to remove

IN HIS first "direction" to the Delhi government after being Delhi government after being Delhi government after being Enforcement Director are until March 28, Chief Minister Avrind Register. In the Common March 1997 of the Capital Common of the Capital Common of the Capital Covernor if needed, he will definitely help you." Attail Sunday deling. "He is night but the work for Delhi people will not stop, the people of Delhi!"

the people of Delhi."

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 suppression of democracy".

BUSINESS AS USUAL BYLINNY HOLL

excise policy case. The agency of tained his custody Frida evening, hours after it told a Del ourt that he was the "king

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

DAMINI NATH

(MCC) has often been cited by the ruling BJP as hindering de welopment and governance. However, the only dataset col-lated by the Election Commi-ssion (EC), at the request of the Law Commission during its fea-sibility study on simultaneous polls in 2018, revealed that more polls in 2018, revealed that more than half of the government ref-erences were cleared by the poll watchdog within 72 hours of re-ceipt during the Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections in 2017, and one-thin 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,

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW AN EXPRESS RTI



peatedly underlined tha imposition of MCC each time a poll is announced of development work. This is one of its key arby the panel on 'One Nation One Election' led

We will seriously look into massers of the way and the look of them after knock on door looked as saying by the Express Bonds worth ₹5,179 cr bought by the 26 firms; BJP got 37%, TMC 18%, Cong 12%

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh celebrates Holi with soldiers in Leh on Sunday. Singh was earlier supposed to visit soldiers in

26 firms facing agencies' heat bought

AN HISHNILDAS

OF 26 companies that hought the electoral bonds and have faced action by investigative agencies. 16 donated to political agencies, 16 donated to political parties through bonds only after they came under the radar of these agencies, Further, the do-nations of another six compa-nies surged after these agencies

HOLI WITH FORCES

started cracking down on them. A scrutiny of the 26 compahies by The Indian Express reveals the parties that benefited in-cluded the BJP, which rules at the Centre, and got 37.34% of the

MEGHA ENGG TOP DONOR FOR BRS TOO,

GAVE POLL BONDS

in states like the TMC out 18 29%. DMK 11.35%, BJD 4.48% and BRS 8.59%. The Congress, which rules

in three states, got 11.97%. Overall, between April and February 2024, these 26 companies bought Rs 700.65 crore in bonds before facing crore in bonds before facing agencies' actions and Rs 4,479.6 crore after. Ten of these compa-nies donated a total of at least Rs

100 crore each.
For instance, the top donor
future Garaine, owned by "fottery
king" Santiago Martin, did not purchase a single electroal bond until
a year after it faced an ED probe on
alleged money laundering
charges, Subsequently, the Coimbof the DMK, the ruling party in Tamil Nadu, and Rs 542 crore to

The BJP got Rs 100 crore. 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

crore). But after it faced central action, it bought bonds worth Rs 355 crore, including Rs 175 crore to the TMC, Rs 65 crore to the BP and Rs 15 crore to the Congress.

A closer look at the top nine companies, which donated more than Rs 100 crore each through the companies.

Future Gaming and

■Bonds purchased before ED tion 0; after action Rs 1,365 cr Redemptions: TMC (Rs 542 crore), DMK(Rs 503 crore), YSRCF

(Rs 154 crore), BJP (Rs 100 crore) Congress (Rs 50 crore), SKM (Rs 11 crore), SDF (Rs 5 crore)

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

SHAJU PHILIP MARCH 24

HIS MALAYALAM povel cerer who gets close to a land-lord's family and woos the daughter, has been read by more than 0,000 people on an online pla

appearing from October 2018. The story had all the ingredients of a hit horror flick - revenge witchcraft, ghosts, and demons. However, the writer, a self-

proclaimed black magic practi-tioner, is now also accused in two tioner, is now also accused in two murders spanning over eight years in a case that police stumbled upon during an investigation bed upon during an investigation severaled a twisted tale that had uncanny similarities with the plot of his 2018 novel. Also known as Puthenpurackal Nitheesh, he was arrested in the early hours

police came across evidence pointing to two murders that they allegedly committed — of a newborn baby, allegedly Nitheesh's, and Vishnu's father NG Vijayan (65). It started with the police's

It started with the police's search of the rented house that the two lived in at Kakkatukada village under Kanchiyar pan-chayat near Kattappana town to see where the stolen items were leept. During the search, the po-lice four the rented in the con-traction of the con-



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

mother and sister. The women were found to be in a mentally

tacted the relatives of the family, who indicated that Vijayan, the head of the family, had been ssing since last September. Further investigation found

Nitheesh's serialised novel had

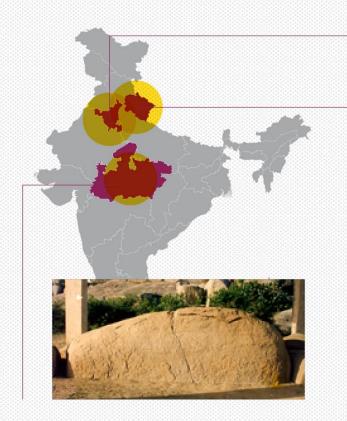
many similarities to the first Further investigation found that Nitheesh, who had attached the many similarities to the first crime. There are not of originally came further under the first many similarities to the first crime. There are not of original that the many similarities to the first crime. There are not originally similarities to the first crime. They are not originally similarities to the first crime. They are not originally similarities

their rented house.
Inspector N Suresh Kumar,
who is investigating the case, said
After the Idlling of the new-

After the killing of the new-born, the police said, the whole family came further under Nitheesh's influence. They acted as per Nitheesh's directions. He had even sexually abused

the floor of one of the moms at... Nitheesh studied up to class 12... owned. Nitheesh also lived in t

MONUMENTS AND SITES THAT ARE UNTRACEABLE



Madhya Pradesh

• Rock Inscription, Satna





Haryana

- Kos Minar, Mujesar, Faridabad
- Kos Minar, Shahabad, Kurukshetra



Uttarakhand

Kutumbari Temple, Dwarahat, Almora ASI to remove 18
'untraceable'
monuments from its list
of protected sites

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



A 'monument of national importance', if designated by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), authorises the central government to "maintain, protect and promote the site", which may be considered of significant historical importance, as mandated by the Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.



Currently, there are around 3,600 monuments of national importance being protected by the ASI.

- The monuments facing delisting include Kos Minar No.13 at Mujessar village in Haryana; Bara Khamba Cemetery in <u>Delhi</u>; Gunner Burkill's Tomb at Rangoon in Jhansi; Cemetery at Gaughat in <u>Lucknow</u>; and Telia Nala Buddhist ruins, which form part of a deserted village in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- Delisting of the monuments effectively means the central agency won't have any onus to protect them, and activities related to construction and urbanisation in the area can be carried out in a regular manner.

Currently, the ASI has 3,693 monuments under its purview, which will fall to 3,675 once the delisting exercise is completed in the next few weeks.

According to an official gazette notification dated March 8, published last week, the ASI has invoked Section 35 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (AMASR Act) to delist the 18 monuments, stating that these "have ceased to be of national importance".

- The missing monuments included 11 in Uttar Pradesh, as well as two each in Delhi and Haryana. It also included monuments in Assam, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
- According to the ASI, which is under the Ministry of Culture, 14 of these 50 monuments were lost to rapid urbanisation, 12 submerged by reservoirs or dams, and 24 remain untraceable.

The 18 monuments to be delisted come from the list of 24 monuments that remain untraceable.

Official logo of the ASI



Abbreviation ASI

Formation 1861; 163 years ago

Founder Alexander Cunningham

Type Governmental organization

Headquarters New Delhi

Region served India

Official English language Hindi

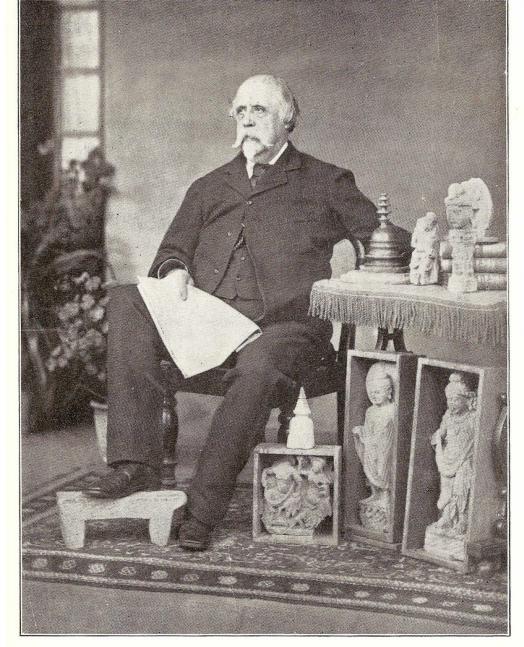
Director Yadubir Singh Rawat **General**

Parent Ministry of Culture organisation

Budget ₹1,102.83 crore

(US\$140 million) (2023-

241[1]



MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ALEXANDER C. CUNNINGHAM, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.,
LATE BENGAL ENGINEERS.



News / Explained / Explained Culture / On Holi, a brief history of India's love affair with bhang

On Holi, a brief history of India's love affair with bhang

According to some records, bhang has been in use for thousands of years and finds mention in ancient texts such as the Vedas. In Ayurveda, bhang is believed to cure not only physical ailments but also anxiety.



- According to Hindu mythology, cannabis came into existence after the gods churned an ocean of milk while looking for an elixir that would make them immortal and restore their strength.
- During the process of churning, a drop of *amrita* (sacred nectar) fell from the sky and at the place where it landed, the first cannabis plant sprouted. It's believed that Shiva, who had consumed the poison Halahala that emerged during the churning of the ocean, ate this plant to cool his throat.



What is bhang?

- Bhang is essentially a green-coloured paste made from seeds and leaves of the female cannabis plants — they have higher potency and Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content than their male counterparts.
- Prepared by soaking and then grinding the plant material together, the paste is, traditionally, rolled into smooth balls, known as bhang goli.

Is bhang legal in India?

 Under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, which was enacted in 1985 and deals with drugs and their trafficking in India, cannabis has been defined as a narcotic drug and its cultivation, possession, consumption or transportation is prohibited. However, only certain parts of a cannabis plant, such as resin and "flowering or fruiting tops" come under this ban. The Act excludes from prohibition its leaves and seeds, which are used for preparing bhang. Notably, although the cultivation of cannabis is punishable across the country, harvesting the leaves that grow by themselves is perfectly legal.

Over the years, states have also come up with their own laws regarding the sale and consumption of bhang. A handful of them like Uttar Pradesh even license and tax bhang sales, much like alcohol.

Even if some states have banned the substance's consumption and sale, authorities rarely crack down on its sellers and customers on the occasion of Holi, a report by *The Wall Street Journal* said.

Arresting the Chief Ministers

Delhi Chief Minister Aravind Kejriwal was recently arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an excise policy case linked money laundering case

A chief minister is permitted certain privileges within prison, such as making official phone calls and accessing crucial documents.

Representation of People's Act, 1951- It outlines disqualification provisions for certain offences, but a *conviction* is a prerequisite for anyone holding the office.

- **Disqualification** The Act says that a person convicted for an offence and sentenced to <u>2 years</u> <u>or above</u> shall be disqualified from the date of such conviction.
- **Electoral disqualification** It says the lawmaker shall continue to be disqualified for a further period of *6 years* after his release.
- **Article 361** President and Governor enjoy constitutional immunity from civil and criminal proceedings until the completion of their term.

This immunity does not extend to Prime Ministers or Chief Ministers, as they are regarded as equals under the Constitution's principle of the Right to Equality before the law.

Despite this, they are not automatically disqualified solely by virtue of an arrest.

Delhi framework- Delhi is a Union Territory not a State, it operates under a <u>unique constitutional framework</u> outlined in Articles 239 AA and 239 AB of the Indian Constitution.

Article 239 AB- The Lieutenant Governor can seek Presidential intervention potentially leading to the imposition of President's rule.

Hyperloop Technology

A Switzerland-based hyperloop company Swisspod Technologies signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with TuTr Hyperloop, a spin-off of IIT Madras to develop hyperloop systems in India.

Origin- It is a proposed ultrahigh-speed, ground-level, solarpowered cargo and mass transportation system conceptualized in 2013 by American entrepreneur Elon Musk.

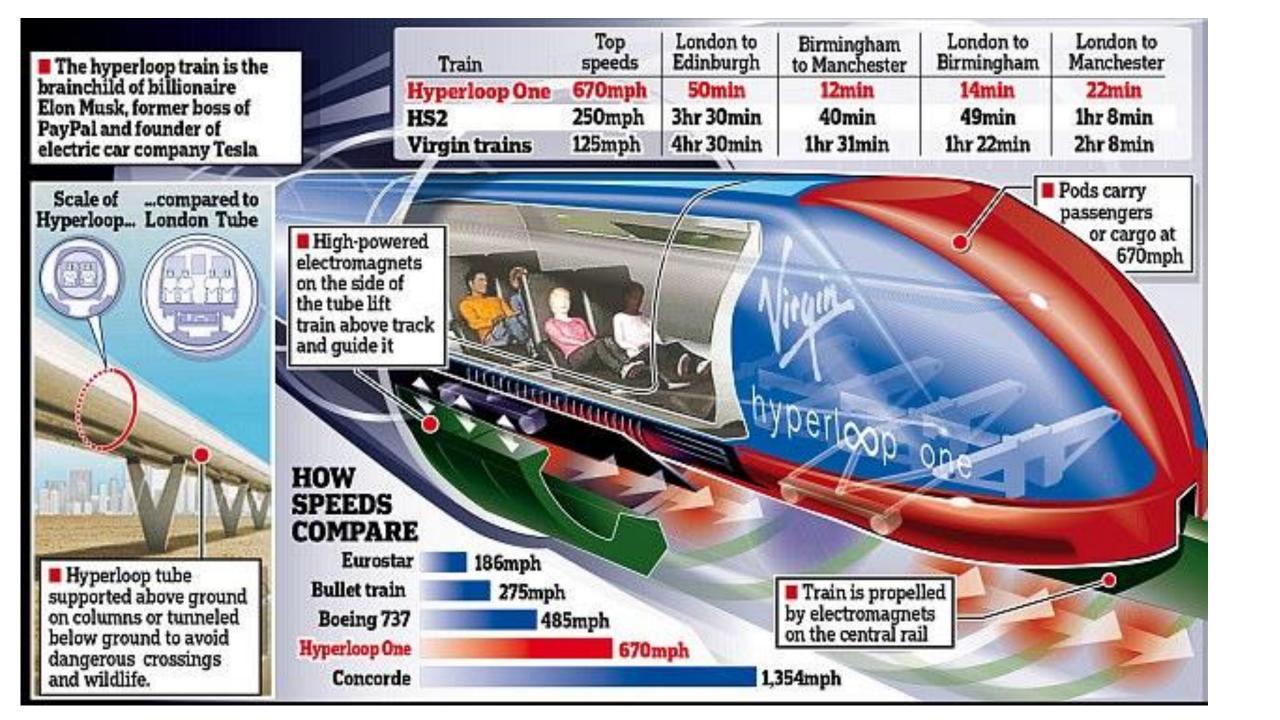




Technology- It is the <u>5th mode of transportation</u> Hyperloop which works on a technology that would use <u>magnetic levitation</u> in low-pressure tubes to transport people and goods at airplane-like speeds.



Maglev- It is the system in which the vehicle runs levitated from the guide way (corresponding to the rail tracks of conventional railways).





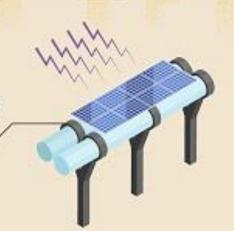
hyperloop

OPEN-SOURCE

Hyperloop is an open-sourced technology. **Elon Musk** gave his idea away and encouraged others to develop it.

SUSTAINABILITY

Hyperloop will be powered by the sun, with solar panels positioned along the transport tubes.



SPEED

900мрн 200мрн 80мрн

IT WILL TRAVEL AT 800MPH, FASTER THAN THE SPEED OF SOUND.



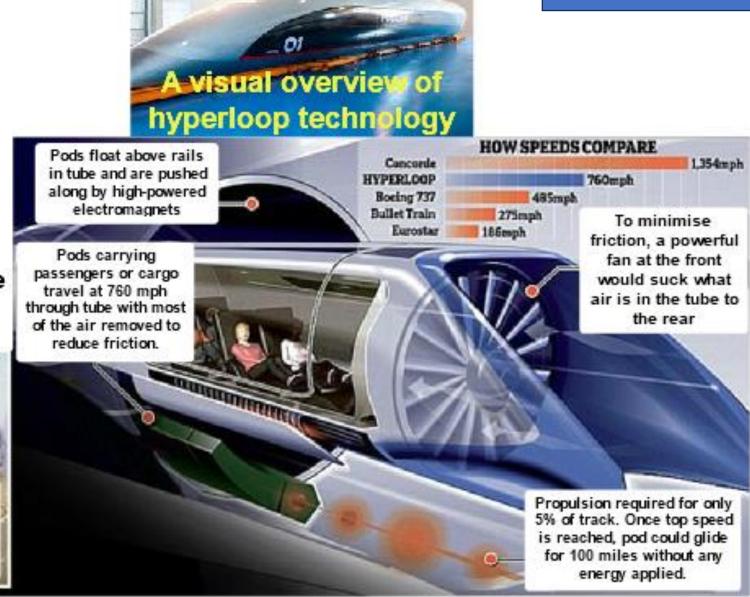
ONE-TENTH THE OVERALL COST OF THE RAIL SERVICE CALIFORNIA HAS PLANNED.

IT COULD ONLY RUN IN A FIXED STRAIGHT LINE, OR ELSE THE SPEED WOULD MAKE YOU SICK.



The supersonic hyperloop technology is brainchild of Elon Musk, the founder of Tesla





Travelling in a Tube

THE TECHNOLOGY

A capsule, with passengers, travels at speeds of more than 1200 KM/H inside a

Vacuum tube

tube has an area of LOW PRESSURE INSIDE IT

INDIA PLANS

Hyperloop can be built in India in

38 MONTHS

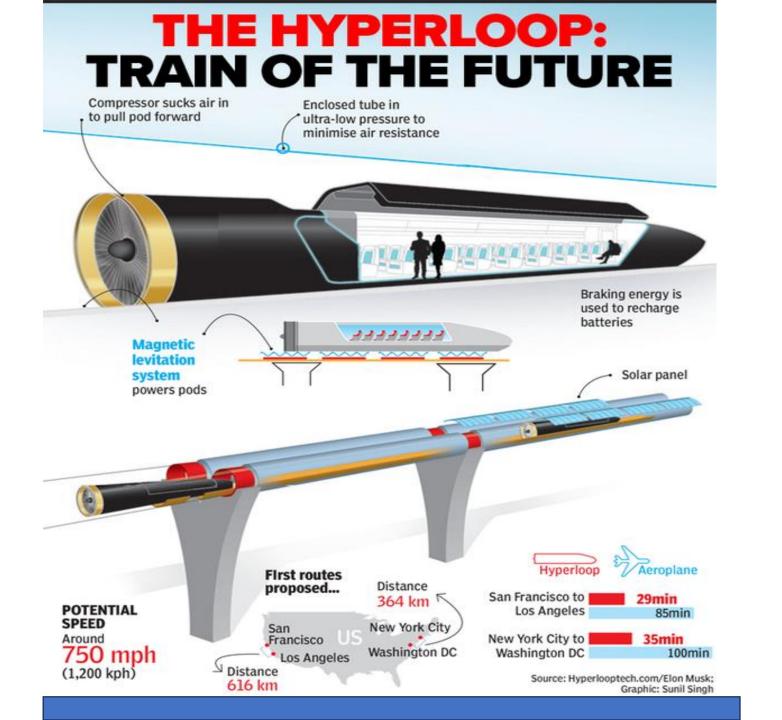
Working on the Hyperloop, of which 25 ARE FROM INDIA

It uses power from

RENEWABLE ENERGY

sources like solar energy, regenerative braking & wind power

These tubes stand on pylons that can **WITHSTAND** quakes & crashes



World Tuberculosis (TB) Day



Every year on March 24th, World TB Day is observed to honor the announcement made by **Dr. Robert Koch in 1882** regarding his discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacterium responsible for tuberculosis (TB).



This day serves as an educational platform to raise awareness about TB and its global implications.



World Tuberculosis (TB) Day, 24 March 2024, continues with the theme "Yes! We can end TB".

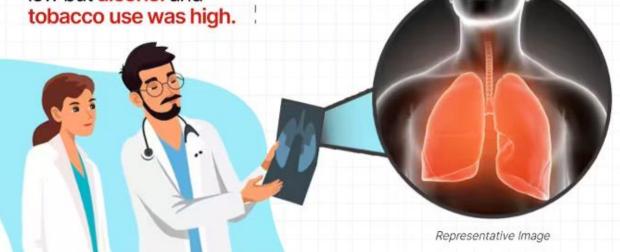


With continued efforts and awareness campaigns, the aim is to eradicate the world's deadliest disease.

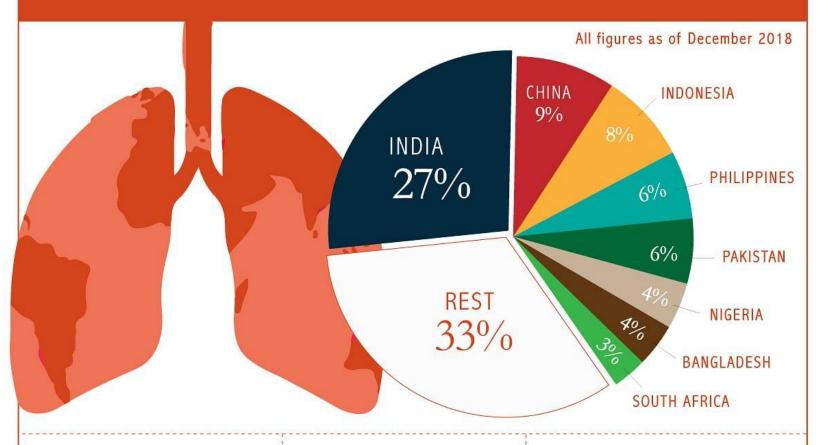
Nutrition and Tuberculosis

- More than two-thirds of trial participants were tribals, most of whom were accessing ration from the PDS.
- Undernutrition (BMI<18.5 kg/m2) was prevalent in four out of five patients, with severe undernutrition (BMI<16 kg/m2) in nearly half of these.
- Prevalence of HIV, diabetes, MDR-TB was low but alcohol and tobacco use was high.

- Nearly one per cent
 of patients were hypotensive,
 hypoxic, or were unable to stand,
 indicating need for in-patient care.
- One of three contacts across all ages had undernutrition at enrolment.
- There was a 39 per cent reduction of incidence of all forms of TB and a 48 per cent reduction of incidence of infectious TB in the intervention group of families.



INDIA HAS LARGEST NUMBER OF TUBERCULOSIS PATIENTS IN THE WORLD



TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE
IN THE WORLD SUFFERING
FROM TUBERCULOSIS: 1 crore

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE
IN INDIA SUFFERING FROM
TUBERCULOSIS: 26.9 lakh

DEATHS DUE TO TUBERCULOSIS

FELL FROM **1.6 million** IN 2017

TO **1.5 million** IN 2018

Source: WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

ThePrint

Tuberculosis

Global TB targets:

SDG Target 3.3: Eliminate TB by 2030

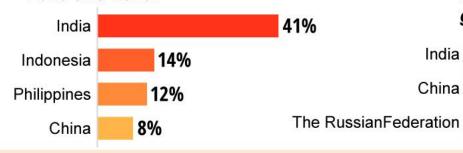
WHO End TB Strategy



90%
reduction in the annual number of TB deaths by 2030

India: Eliminate TB by 2025

Top countries in global drop of TB case notifications between 2019 and 2020:



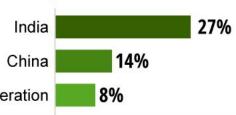
Burden of TB in India:

In 2019 the estimated TB incidence was **2,640,000**

The estimated incidence of people with MDR/RR-TB is **130,000**.



Largest share of the global burden in 2019:



TB incidence for "high burden" countries:

INDIA 2,640,000 INDONESIA 845,000 CHINA 833,000 PHILIPPINES 599,000



DOES SWEATING BURN MORE CALORIES?

MYTH

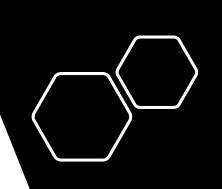
 SWEATING BURNS MORE CALORIES & THEREFORE MORE FAT. I SHOULD TURN OFF THE A/C AND WORKOUT IN A SWEATER TO SWEAT MORE.



TRUTH

IT IS SIMPLY THE BODY'S WAY OF REGULATING TEMPERATURE. I'll LOSE WATER WEIGHT BUT ALSO DRINK IT RIGHT BACK.





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By Bhunesh Sir

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- **
 ✓** DOUBT SESSION
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SELF IMPROVEMENT

LANGUAGE SPEAKING



















