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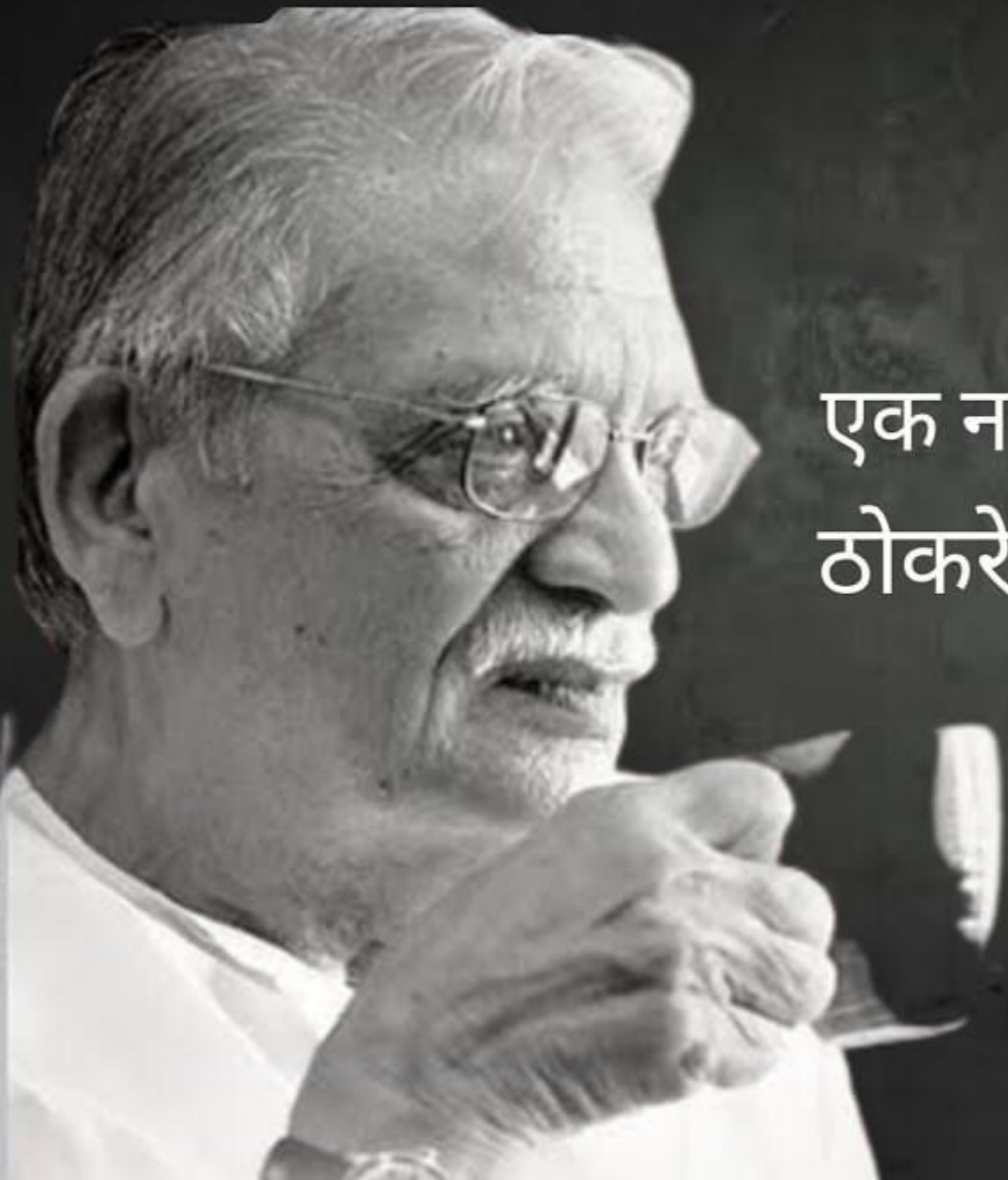


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एक न एक दिन तो हाँसिल कर ही लूंगा मंज़िल
ठोकरे ज़हर तो नहीं जो खाकर मर जाऊँगा



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2024 POLLS
How far will Artificial Intelligence go?

As synthetic and realistic deepfakes have found their way into election campaigning, experts warn against the prevalent menace of misinformation

MAGAZINES PAGE 1

The dissident vocalist in the Carnatic music scene

PROFILES PAGE 9

Tropical cyclones of higher intensity demand new category

SCIENCE PAGE 10

Mayank Yadav swings it Super Giants' way

SPORT PAGE 13

INSIDE

'This poll is about preserving secular state'

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has underlined that the upcoming Lok Sabha election is a referendum on "preserving India's secular democracy" and little else, in an e-mail interview with The Hindu on Friday. Mr. Vijayan articulated the pivotal nature of the poll. » PAGE 3

Left seeks to iron out differences in West Bengal

KOLKATA With the Left Front's All India Forward Bloc and the Congress in collision course over the Coochbehar and Purulia seats in West Bengal ahead of the Lok Sabha election, Left Front chairperson Biman Basu said the allies have enough time to sort out differences. » PAGE 4

Chaos during aid delivery kills five in Gaza

GAZA STRIP The Palestine Red Crescent said five persons were killed and dozens wounded by gunfire and a stampede during an aid delivery on Saturday in northern Gaza, where famine looms. Video footage showed a convoy of trucks moving past burning debris near a distribution point. » PAGE 12

CAA Rules silent on fate of rejected applicants

Applicants can be rejected by an empowered committee if their documents fail scrutiny | Adverse security clearance report also leads to rejection; review procedures absent in CAA Rules | Citizenship Act, 1955, had a provision to file review application before the Union govt.

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

As applications start coming in through the online citizenship portal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), some potential applicants are worried about their fate if rejected. The law's Rules, notified earlier this month, are silent regarding any review process for applications rejected by the empowered committees which have the final authority to accord citizenship under the Act.

Some potential applicants, including lakhs of people from the Matua community of West Bengal, entered the country decades ago and have been living as Indian citizens for many years. However, if their submitted documents now fail the scrutiny of the empowered committee, or if there is an adverse security clearance report about them, their applications for Indian citizenship under the CAA could be rejected.

'Detention centres'
"If an application is rejected, people may end up in detention centres," warned Mamata Banerjee, a Trinamool Congress parliamentarian who hails from a Hindu community that migrated from Bangladesh, an Assam-based lawyer who has worked extensively on citizenship cases in the State, "the review of the rejection is to be done by the same authority, the empowered committee (as per Section 15 A of the Act). In case the review is rejected, a writ petition can be filed before the High Court."

'Raises concern'
The ambiguity around the rejection of applications poses concerns, particularly for the Matua community in West Bengal, who stand to benefit from the CAA's provision of fast-tracked citizenship. Lakhs of people belong-

Hurdles in front
What happens after a citizenship application is uploaded online?

- 1 A district-level committee headed by the Superintendent of Police will verify the documents
- 2 The officer will forward the application to an empowered committee
- 3 The empowered committee on being satisfied with the suitability of the applicant, may grant him citizenship of India by registration or naturalisation, as the case may be, and issue a certificate

A protest rally held against CAA in Kolkata. AFP

des. The parent law, the Citizenship Act, 1955, says that the applicant may file a review application before the Central government within 30 days and "the decision of the Central government on such review shall be final."

According to Aman Wa-

der, an Assam-based lawyer who has worked extensively on citizenship cases in the State, "the review of the rejection is to be done by the same authority, the empowered committee (as per Section 15 A of the Act). In case the review is rejected, a writ petition can be filed before the High Court."

'Raises concern'
The ambiguity around the rejection of applications poses concerns, particularly for the Matua community in West Bengal, who stand to benefit from the CAA's provision of fast-tracked citizenship. Lakhs of people belong-

ing to the Scheduled Caste community migrated from Bangladesh (earlier East Pakistan) before and after the 1971 war with Pakistan. Many came without any papers but subsequently acquired all documents proving their Indian citizenship, such as passports and voter identity cards.

Ms. Thakur, a Matua leader nominated to the Rajya Sabha by the Trinamool Congress in February, said that the Rules were akin to making people slaves. "No one has applied for CAA here. Even Union Minister Sarbananda Kumar has not applied yet, his ancestors are from Bangladesh. If an applica-

tion is rejected, people may end up in detention centres," she said.

According to the Rules, the applicant must declare the country they belong to along with their "date of entry into India", and upload on the citizenship portal any of the nine documents issued by government authorities in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh to support their claim.

This means that though the CAA was envisaged for undocumented migrants belonging to the six communities from the three neighbouring countries, the Rules indicate that documents are essential.

Epitome of elegance



Traditional affairs: Girls perform Bihu after completing a dance workshop ahead of Bohag Bihu festival in Guwahati on Saturday. Bohag Bihu will be celebrated in Assam from April 13 to mark the beginning of the Assamese New Year. (PTI/AN/PTI/AN)

Chargesheet filed against NewsClick in UAPA case

Shikha Mishra
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Saturday filed its first chargesheet against news portal NewsClick and its founder Prabir Purkayastha, in a case lodged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, following allegations that they received funds through Chinese firms to spread pro-China propaganda.

The chargesheet, which runs into thousands of pages, was brought in a trunk and filed before the Additional Sessions Judge Hardeep Kaur of the Patiala House Court. It had named Mr. Purkayastha and PPK NewsClick Studio Private Limited as accused, special public prosecutor Akhand Pratap Singh submitted in the court. The court posted the case for April 16.

The chargesheet came nearly six months after the police arrested Mr. Purkayastha and the human resources head of the news portal Amit Chakraborty, on October 3, 2023. Mr. Chakraborty later turned approver in the case.

Under Section 43 D of the UAPA, the news portal chargesheet in a case extends from 90 days to up to 180 days. In the case in hand, the court granted three extensions to the special cell of the Delhi Police to file the chargesheet.

The FIR was registered after The New York Times published a report saying that the portal got money from U.S. businessmen Neelam Kataria and Anand Kumar, a Home Minister's private member of the propaganda department of the Communist Party of India (CPI) to distort the map of India. The report named Mir and Arunachal Pradesh as disputed territory.

President presents Bharat Ratna to four posthumously

Dr. Nitya Rao receives Bharat Ratna from President Droupadi Murmu on behalf of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan on Saturday. (AP)

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday conferred the Bharat Ratna on former Prime Ministers P.V. Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh; former Bihar Chief Minister Karpoori Thakur; and agronomist Dr. M.S. Swaminathan. All four awards were presented posthumously at a brief ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The late Rao's award was received by his son, P.V. Prabhakar Rao, while Singh's award was received by his grandson, Jayant Chaudhary. Dr. Swaminathan's daughter, Nitya Rao, received the award for her father, and Thakur's was received by his son, Ravi Nath Thakur.

President Murmu is likely to visit Mr. Advani, the other recipient of the award, in his residence to honour him as his mobility is restricted because of frail health.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Congress president and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar were among those who were present at the ceremony in the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

'Exemplary actions'

"As the ninth Prime Minister of India, Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao led far-reaching economic reforms. Earlier, in his youth, he had taken an active part in the freedom struggle, especially against the misrule and oppression in the Nizam-ruled Hyderabad," the official handle of the Rashtrapati Bhavan said in a post on X.

Recalling the late Charan Singh's role during the freedom struggle in another post on X, President Murmu said, "His contribution to zamindari abolition and land reforms, and his deep understanding of the economy, are respectfully remembered." President Murmu said Dr. Swaminathan played a major role in making India self-sufficient in food production.

Because the selfless actions of Karpoori Thakur, the official handle of Rashtrapati Bhavan said: "Working tirelessly to improve the lives of the disadvantaged people, he commanded high regard and had earned the honorific, 'Jan-Nayak'."

Zakaat funds help free prison inmates during Ramadan

Over the past few years, some organisations have used a part of their savings set aside for charity during the holy month to free prisoners who cannot afford bail or those who have no support system to pay fines associated with their convictions

Syed Muhammad HYDERABAD

It is in the month of Ramadan that most Muslims busy themselves with calculating zakaat, a prominent manifestation of charity in Islam. Usually given to those in need, over the past few years, zakaat funds, calculated at 2.5% of an individual's annual savings and eligible assets, are being used to free inmates of jails who have served their prison sentences but have no support systems to pay fines associated with their convictions.

Moin Pasha, an octogenarian, says, "It was two years ago that I got to know of an organisation that uses zakaat money to pay those who cannot afford bail. Some of these prisoners are sole breadwinners and everything depends on them," she says.

The Movement for Peace and Justice (MPJ), a non-profit, is one such organisation that has been gathering zakaat from donors and channelling these funds to secure prisoner release. "Since last year we have paid 130 fines that are associated with prison sentences. Additionally, we have paid bail money for 35 prisoners and have got them all released," Ahmed Hameeduddin Shaheed, finance secretary, MPJ, says.

The MPJ, an affiliate of



A noble cause: MPJ secretary Shukh Kasim Sahab with Khamsam district jail authorities. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, a socio-religious organisation, after due diligence, identifies prisoners who are first time offenders involved in small crimes, and whose families are unable to pay bail or fines. "We have been active

aim and object of our organisation is to help everyone," he says.

'Religious injunction'
Ghazala Ahmed (name changed upon request), an entrepreneur, too has been earmarking a part of her zakaat funds for this cause. "The goodness here is two-fold: a religious injunction is being fulfilled, and we help a family in dire need," she says.

The All India Milli Council, another socio-religious group, has secured the release of 68 inmates lodged in prisons in and around Hyderabad, since last year, according to its office-bearer Musfiq Omar Abdeeen Qasmi Madani.

President presents Bharat Ratna to four posthumously



Dr. Nitya Rao receives Bharat Ratna from President Droupadi Murmu on behalf of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan on Saturday. ANI

The Hindu Bureau
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The late Rao's award

ceremony in the Rashtrapati Bhavan.





'Exemplary actions'


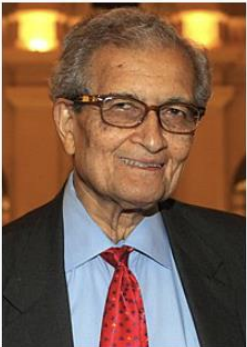


"As the ninth Prime Minister of India, Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao led far-reaching economic reforms. Earlier, in his youth, he had taken an active part in the freedom struggle, especially against the misrule and oppression in the Nizam-ruled Hyderabad," the official handle of the Rashtrapati Bhavan said in a post on X.



BHARAT RATNA AWARDED

President Droupadi Murmu confers Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour, posthumously on former prime ministers P V Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh, agriculture scientist M S Swaminathan and former Bihar chief minister Karpooi Thakur during a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Saturday. *PTI*

Type	National civilian
Description	Highest Civilian Award of the Republic of India
Country	 India
Presented by	 President of India
Ribbon	
Obverse	An image of the Sun along with the words "Bharat Ratna", inscribed in Devanagari script, on a peepal (<i>Ficus religiosa</i>) leaf
Reverse	A platinum State Emblem of India placed in the centre with the national motto, " Satyameva Jayate " (Truth alone triumphs) in Devanagari script
Established	1954; 70 years ago
First awarded	1954 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C. Rajagopalachari • Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan • C. V. Raman
Last awarded	2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karpoori Thakur • Lal Krishna Advani • Chaudhary Charan Singh • P.V. Narasimha Rao • M. S. Swaminathan
Total	53
	Precedence
Next (lower)	 Param Vir Chakra

1999		Jayaprakash Narayan [#]	Bihar	1902-1979	Narayan was an independence activist and social reformer. He was commonly referred as "Loknayak" ("People's Leader") and is known for the Total Revolution Movement initiated during the mid-1970s against the then government of India. ^[159]
		Amartya Sen	West Bengal	1933-	Sen is an economist and the winner of the Nobel memorial prize in economic sciences in 1998. ^{[160][161]}
		Gopinath Bordoloi [#]	Assam	1890-1950	Bordoloi was an independence activist and politician, who served as the first chief minister of Assam (1946–50). ^[162] His was instrumental in uniting Assam with India when parts of it wanted to accede to Pakistan . ^[163]
		Ravi Shankar	Uttar Pradesh	1920-2012	Ravi Shankar was a musician and sitar player. He has won four Grammy Awards and is often considered "the world's best-known exponent of Hindustani classical music". ^{[164][165]}

Embarrassing: SC judge on Govts facing litigation from state govts



SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, MARCH 30

OBSERVING THAT there is a recent trend of Governors getting involved in litigation for not assenting to Bills sent for approval by state governments, Supreme Court Judge B V Nagarathna Saturday said they should act in accordance with the Constitution. This is not a healthy trend under the Constitution to bring what the Governor does before constitutional courts for consideration. Though it is called a gubernatorial post, it is a serious constitutional post, and Governors must act as per the Constitution so this kind of litigation reduces. It is quite embarrassing for Governors to be told to do or not do a thing. The time has come where they would be now told, I suppose, to do their duties as per the Constitution," she observed.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE WORLD

BIDEN: MOST WORLD LEADERS TOLD ME NOT TO LET TRUMP WIN 2024

'Misbehaviour, assault': Football federation members held after two women players complain

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA & SHASHANK NAIR
PANAJI, NEW DELHI MARCH 30

THE GOA police on Saturday arrested Deepak Sharma, an executive committee member of the All India Football Federation (AIFF), for allegedly assaulting and misbehaving with the two women footballers of a club during their stay in Goa for the ongoing Indian Women's League 2.

"Complaint was received on Saturday at Mapusa police station where players of Chhad FC, a football club participating in the Indian Women's League, alleged that they were assaulted and misbehaved with by one of the accompanying members of the club during their stay in Goa. The accused, Deepak Sharma, has been arrested and necessary legal actions are being taken," North Goa Superintendent of Police Akshay Kulkarni said.

An FIR has been registered under sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 341 (wrongful

DELHI LIQUOR POLICY CASE

ED questions Delhi minister Gahlot, AAP alleges BJP plot, attempt to topple Govt

BJP counters, says AAP government and party MLAs 'inundated in corruption'



JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, MARCH 30

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate on Saturday questioned Delhi minister Kailash Gahlot for close to five hours in connection with the Delhi excise policy case. He is the third senior AAP minister to be examined in the case after Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his former deputy Manish Sisodia, both of whom were subsequently placed under arrest.

Termining the ED's move as "open vendetta" against the AAP leadership — CM Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh and Sarojee Jais — already in custody. In the run-up to polls, with a shadow news on Gahlot, considered an AAP veteran, the party's challenges only increase.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's wife, Sunita Kejriwal (left), with Kalpana Soren, wife of former Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren on Saturday, a day ahead of INDIA bloc's rally at Delhi's Ramlika Maidan. Kalpana later met Congress leader Sonia Gandhi. Arvind Kejriwal is in ED custody since March 21. Hemant Soren has been in custody since January 31. 177

ED Party and the polls

THE SUMMONING of Kailash Gahlot by ED has rattled AAP with its top leadership — CM Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh and Sarojee Jais — already in custody. In the run-up to polls, with a shadow news on Gahlot, considered an AAP veteran, the party's challenges only increase.

CM 'CONFRONTED' WITH INDIVIDUALS KEY TO CASE ED asks Apple to help access CM's phone; questioning for 5 hours daily

RITU SARIN
NEW DELHI, MARCH 30

INVESTIGATORS OF the Enforcement Directorate, who have Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in their custody for over a week now, have contacted Apple to help gain access to his iPhone. The Indian Express has learned.

The ED does not have any recovered electronic evidence against the Chief Minister in the form of his personal computers or desktops but four mobile phones, including his, were confiscated. On the night of his arrest on March 21, around Rs 70,000 was found — and left untouched — in his residence. The Chief Minister had switched off his iPhone and hasn't shared his password, sources said. Senior officials linked to the case said that the Chief Minister, during his questioning, has stated that by accessing his telephone data and chats, the ED would be privy to details of AAP's "election strategy" and pre-poll alliances. The ED is known to have officially contacted Apple, manufacturers of the phone, to obtain

MEGHA'S MEGA PIE

Party	Bonds enrolled
BJP	₹596 cr
BRS	₹199 cr
DMK	₹85 cr
YSRCP	₹37 cr
TDP	₹28 cr
Congress	₹18 cr
JD(S)	₹10 cr
JD(U)	₹5 cr
JanaSena Party	₹6 cr
TOTAL	₹1,000 cr

Donor No.2 Megha bought poll bonds even as it got key Govt, PSU contracts

Megha bought bonds for ₹966 cr; in 9 instances, around time it won contracts

RAVIDUTTA MISHRA & SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 30

A NUMBER of large infrastructure projects of Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Ltd (MEIL) were awarded to it by government departments and public sector undertakings (PSUs) either just before or immediately after the Hyderabad-headquartered company purchased electoral bonds, a

majority of which many were deemed by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), shows an analysis of bond issuance and redemption data made public by the Election Commission of India. MEIL, promoted by Parmeet Singh Reddy and P V Krishna Reddy, purchased bonds worth Rs 966 crore, and is the second largest buyer after Future Gaming. The Indian Express identified five major projects that MEIL

bagged between 2019 and 2023 where the company bought bonds close to being awarded the contracts, and a sizeable chunk of those bonds were then redeemed by the BJP.

Pawar vs Pawar in Baramati: Ajit's wife to take on three-time MP Supriya Sule

MANOJ MORE & VALLABH DEZARKAR
PUNE, MUMBAI, MARCH 30

IT IS GOING to be a Pawar versus Pawar battle in western Maharashtra's Baramati Lok Sabha constituency, the fortress of Maharashtra's Congress (SP) president Shradha Pawar.

The NCP led by Deputy CM Ajit Pawar on Saturday announced the name of his wife Sunita Pawar as his candidate from Baramati, pitting her against her daughter-in-law and Shradha Pawar's sister-in-law Supriya Sule.

On Friday, Congress had in a press conference said it had rejected its own "five-year" (Assessment Year 1994-95 and AY 2017-18 to 2023-21) for the Income-Tax department,

KEY STEP IN INTEGRATION

Plans under way to make Mumbai first tri-service common defence station

Logistics to repairs to supplies, Army, Navy, IAF facilities will be combined

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 30

THE ARMED Forces are planning to turn Mumbai into the first "tri-service common defence station" in the country for the Army, Navy and the Indian Air Force (IAF) — a step aimed at achieving jointness among the three services ahead of the creation of integrated theatre commands. The Indian Express has learned.

Discussions to this effect are under way in the top military hierarchy and a decision is likely to be taken soon, officials said. Currently, there are no common defence stations in India. The Andaman and Nicobar command is a full-fledged command raised as a tri-service command in 2001. Other efforts to bring in jointness among the services — such as inter-service postings — were brought in last year.

A common defence station would mean that all facilities of the Army, Navy, IAF will be combined — including logistics, maintenance, repair and maintenance as well as stores and supply — so that they could be optimised and brought under a common lead service. In the case of Mumbai, the Navy will be the lead service given that it has the largest presence there.

At present, wings of the three services are spread across Mumbai and its suburbs and operate separately. Under the plan, logistics, infrastructure and administration will be brought un-

INHS Asvini, a Naval hospital in Mumbai, is also being used by Army and IAF.



INHS Asvini, a Naval hospital in Mumbai, is also being used by Army and IAF.

der a common chain. The Navy's INS Hamla and INS Kanaka, for example, are responsible for imparting logistics training to Naval personnel and housing a major armament depot respectively. The Army's ordnance depot, a separate training area, an air defence regiment were brought in last year.

As per plans, the resources of the individual services will be integrated so that there is a single system of delivery of supplies such as fuel and ration and common items can be repaired at one place.

As per plans, the resources of the individual services will be shared by all and this would include infrastructures such as schools, hospitals and sports complex; training facilities; as well as stores, repair and administration will be brought un-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Congress gets tax notices for three more years, total I-T demand Rs 3,567 cr

Asst. Assessment Year

MANOJ G
NEW DELHI, MARCH 30

THE CONGRESS Saturday said it has received fresh notices from the Income Tax department for the assessment years 2014-15 to 2016-17 raising demands of Rs 1,243 crore. This together with the notice for assessment years 1994-95 and 2017-18 to 2020-21, takes the total demand to Rs 3,567 crore.

Sources in the main opposition party said the fresh notices were received Friday evening hours after the party hit out at the BJP-led Central government for accusing it of indulging in "tax terrorism" to "thin-out" the electorate" at ahead of Lok Sabha elections.

On Friday, Congress had in a press conference said it had rejected its own "five-year" (Assessment Year 1994-95 and AY 2017-18 to 2023-21) for the Income-Tax department,

TAX DEMANDS ON CONGRESS*

AY	Demand (₹ cr)
1994-95	53.90
2014-15	663.05
2015-16	663.89
2016-17	417.71
2017-18	181.99
2018-19	178.73
2019-20	998.45
2020-21	400.01
TOTAL	3,567.83

asking it to pay Rs 1,823 crore. The string of notices follow the IT department's raids prior to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections when it flagged "unaccounted transactions" of Rs 523 billion.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

The Chamkila story: From Dalit labourer Dhani Ram to a music icon

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR
AMRITSAR, MARCH 30

IN THE early 1980s, Surinder Shinda, a renowned Punjabi folk singer, embarked on a solo singing tour in Canada. Back in India, his duet partner Surinder Sonia, a grade-A singer with four platinum records, seized the opportunity to record four songs with Dhani Ram, the Dalit labourer and budding mu-

sician worked frequently with Shinda. The album, *Ikheye Te Takhu Khande*, brought Dhani Ram instant stardom and gave the world Amar Singh Chamkila. Thirty-six years after his death, fans still continue to fascinate. Named Dhani Ram at birth, he worked as a labourer in Ludhiana's Hailbawal area to support his large family. Despite the challenges, his passion for music drove him to join drama groups. It was in these groups that he honed his acting skills, and mastered the harmonium and tumbi by the age of 16.

Despite working as a labourer, Dhani Ram continued to pursue his musical aspirations, including collaborating with renowned folk singer Shanda. From setting up the stage to writing lyrics, Dhani Ram immersed himself in every aspect of the music industry, ultimately becoming a professional songwriter for Shinda. A pivotal moment in Dhani Ram's life occurred when Shinda embarked on a solo singing tour in Canada during the early 1980s. Four songs penned by him and recorded in a studio duet partner Sonia made him a



Amar Singh Chamkila and his wife and co-singer Amarjot Kaur were shot dead near Jalandhar in 1988.

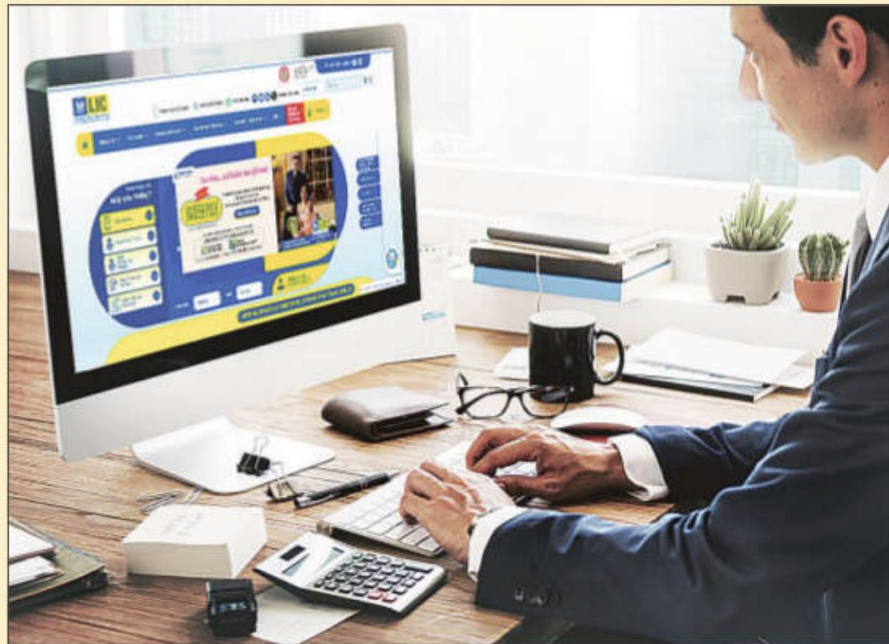
star. Dhani Ram was reborn as Chamkila. The music label released another tape, *Badhe Soode Gurm Ho Goya*, once again featuring the dynamic duo. Chamkila and Sonia's combined talent and unique style captured the hearts of audiences, leading to high demand for their performances at weddings and other events. Despite their joint success, Chamkila received only Rs 20K for each performance, while Sonia earned Rs 60K. This ignited in Sonia's decision to part ways with Chamkila after he insisted on equal compensation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Explainer

Bima Sugam can be a game-changer for insurance

The insurance regulator has approved setting up of Bima Sugam, an online insurance marketplace. **Saikat Neogi** explains how it will make insurance products accessible to the underserved, help companies reduce costs and provide an end-to-end digital journey for all policyholders



4%
insurance penetration
in India which is low
compared to the global
average of 6.8%

₹42,322 crore

commission expenses
of life insurers in FY23,
an increase of 18% as
compared with FY22

₹20,145 crore

commission expenses
of general insurers in
FY23, up from ₹16,931
crore in FY22

● How will it benefit consumers?

THEY CAN COMPARE policies and make informed decisions based on their needs. The portal will eliminate paperwork and save them from the hassles of filling physical forms and submit copies of KYC details like PAN, Aadhaar, photo etc. The soft copies of the policies will be available through an electronic insurance account. Customers can raise service requests, pay renewal premiums and claim maturity benefits from the portal as all policies will be linked and stored in the platform. The regulator had proposed that an insurance company can offer discounts on premium rates for policies purchased from the platform.

● Impact on aggregators

THE REGULATOR HAS said that the platform is not aimed at putting aggregators or online distributors out of business and that they can be a part of it. However, margins of aggregators will be affected as they charge a fixed commission to sell products and push those policies where the commissions are high. The portal will be a repository as all policies will be stored in digitised format, which is not available in an aggregator platform. As Bima Sugam will be promoted by the insurance regulator, people are likely to have greater faith in it.

● What are the challenges?

WHILE THE PLATFORM'S initial launch was in January last year it

● What is Bima Sugam?

IT WILL BE an online insurance marketplace, backed by the regulator, where all insurance companies — life, general and standalone health insurance — can sell their products and customers can compare and purchase various policies. It will manage existing policies and streamline the entire insurance value chain such as viewing details, paying premiums, facilitating claim settlement. The Open Network for Digital

Commerce-like electronic marketplace, Bima Sugam, will serve as a digital public infrastructure that can bridge geographical barriers and make products more affordable. It will make insurance products accessible to underserved populations. The platform will be integrated with various government databases, insurance companies and insurance repositories for sharing and use of data.

● Who will run the marketplace?

IT WILL BE a not-for-profit company formed as per Section 8 of the Companies Act. The shareholding will be held by life, general and standalone insurance companies. However, no single entity will have a controlling stake. While the capital-sharing arrangement is yet to be notified, the draft states that the shareholders will contribute to capital as and when required. The regulator will nominate two members on

the board of the company and approval of the regulator will be required to appoint the chairperson and chief executive officer of the company. The board will constitute a risk management committee to mitigate various risks. Consumers won't be charged for availing the services and they can access the portal through Aadhaar authentication unlike a demat account which is required for share trading.

● How will it help insurance companies?

IT will enable insurers real-time access to validate and authenticate data from multiple government entities such as UIDAI, DigiLocker, Parivahan. It will help them to reduce time and costs for customer onboarding. Companies can reduce their distribution costs and commissions paid to intermediaries — around 40% is paid for selling a new policy — if they sell their products directly by listing their policies

on the platform, manage quotes and receive applications. InsureTech start-ups can leverage the data through the standard application programming interface integration to develop customised products for the evolving needs of consumers across various geographies and geographies. It will encourage innovation while ensuring consumer protection and regulatory compliance.

launch was in January last year. It has been delayed due to several technical challenges. It has to address risk factors such as data privacy protect sensitive personal information of policyholders. The platform must have technology in place for integrating with existing insurance companies' systems and regulatory framework. The regulator will have to create public awareness for widespread adoption and ensure user-friendliness so that those with limited knowledge of technology can even operate on it, especially in semi-urban and rural areas.



financialexp.epapr.in



New Delhi



Non-residents will have a say in Kerala's voting pattern

Aabha Raveendran

KOZHIKODE

With the latest available statistics from the Election Commission showing 88,000 expatriate voters from Kerala, several candidates or their poll managers from constituencies in northern parts of the State are embarking on foreign visits with the intention of renewing support, both in terms of votes and funds, ahead of the Lok Sabha election.

Non-residents will have a say in voting pattern in Kerala

Despite the hike in airfares, a large expatriate population from West Asian countries are likely to be in the State; candidates or their poll managers too visit these countries to garner NRKs' support

Aabha Raveendran
KOZHIKODE

Ahead of the Lok Sabha election, several candidates or their poll managers from constituencies in northern Kerala are embarking on visits to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations, especially the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Some have already paid their visit and returned. Their aim is to renew support from expatriates, both in terms of votes and funds, as the clout wielded by the community can sway the outcome, a fact that political parties are keenly aware of.

"Expatriates' votes could be a determining factor in polls in at least five constituencies – Malappuram, Kasaragod, Kollam, Vadamakara, and Thrissur," said Attakoya Pallikkandy, chairman of the Pravasi Development, Rehabilitation



ILLUSTRATION: SATHEESH VELLINEZHI

and Welfare Centre based in Kozhikode.

The Malayali diaspora from Pathanamthitta, Kottayam, and Ernakulam districts are mostly settled in the U.S., Canada, Australia, or the U.K. and rarely return to their homeland. On the other hand, those working in the GCC are closer to their roots.

The latest available statistics from the Election Commission show that there are around 88,000 expatriate voters from Ker-

ala, of whom around 82,000 are men while around 6,000 are women.

However, it is a concern that majority of the eligible voters out of the 35 lakh Non-Resident Keralites (NRKs), including 25 lakh in GCC, have not applied for the suffrage rights. "It is not just the voting rights, but their influence on their families. Every NRK has at least four people back home whom he or she can influence," said K.V. Shamsudheen, chairman of

UAE-based Pravasi Bandhu Welfare Trust.

Past two elections

Mr. Pallikandy claims that the expatriate population was instrumental in turning the tide in favour of the United Democratic Front in the 2019 Lok Sabha election, while it was clearly in favour of the Left Democratic Front in the Assembly election in 2021. Of the overseas voters, about 35,000 belong to Kozhikode district, followed by Malappuram district with 15,000. "About 30% of voters in Kozhikode district are either working in the GCC countries or their dependents are, or they are Gulf-returnees," he said.

Incidentally, the lackadaisical approach of the Centre in making arrangements for them to exercise their franchise from the respective embassies or consulates has irked the expatriates in the GCC.

A record 60 traditional products from across India granted GI tag

Sangeetha Kandavel

CHENNAI

Over 60 products from across India, including Banaras Thandai, have been given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

This is the first time that such a large number of products have been given the GI tag at one go, a senior official from the Geographical Indications Registry said, adding that more States were coming forward and filing applications to get a GI tag for their traditional products.

Six traditional crafts from Assam – Asharikandi terracotta craft, Pani Meteka craft, Sarthebari metal craft, Jaapi (bamboo headgear), Mishing handloom products, and Bihu dhol – have bagged the GI tag.

Thirteen other products from Assam have been given the tag, including the Bodo Dokhona, the tradi-



The Bihu *dhol* has been given the GI tag. THE HINDU

tional attire of Bodo women; and Bodo Eri silk, referred to as the fabric of peace or *ahimsa* (non-violence), which comes from the silkworm *Samia ricini* that feeds mostly on the leaves of the castor plant (*Ricinus communis*), and cassava. Bodo Jwmgra (a traditional scarf), Bodo Gamsa (traditional dress of Bodo men), Bodo Thorkha (a musical instrument), and Bodo Sifung (a long flute) are also on the list.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, in a post on X, said it was a big win for Assam's heritage. "These products, deeply rooted in history, support nearly one lakh people directly," he said.

The famous Banaras Thandai, a drink made by blending milk with a mix of nuts, seeds and spices, also got the tag. Details in the GI filing mentioned that on any given evening, in the heart of the city, in areas

such as Gaudaulia Chowk, Lahurabir, and the old lane of Pakka Mahal, traditional Banaras Thandai shops attract large crowds. The drink was first introduced centuries ago as an offering to the Shri Kashi Vishwanath deity on the occasion of Mahashivaratri, Rangbhari Ekadasi, and Holi. The Banaras Tabla, Banaras Shehnai, Banaras Lal Bharamirch, and Banaras Lal Peda are among the products that walked away with GI tags in this region.

The Tripura region secured two tags – one for the Pachra-Rignai, which is a traditional dress worn on special occasions, and the other for the Matabari Peda, a sweet preparation.

Meghalaya Garo Textile weaving, which is linked to socio-cultural and religious rituals, Meghalaya Lyrnai Pottery, and Meghalaya Chubitchi also secured the tag.

Tamil Nadu accounts for 30% of India's electronics exports

In the last two fiscal years, close to 40% of India's smartphones were sent from just one district – Kancheepuram

DATA POINT

Rebecca Rose Varghese
& Muhammed Mukhtar

Tamil Nadu, India's largest exporter of electronic goods in FY23, accounted for 30% of all electronic goods exports from India in FY24. The State is in fact a late bloomer in this sector, with Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka dominating electronic goods exports until FY22. However, in recent years, among the top exporters of electronics, only Tamil Nadu's numbers have consistently risen, while the figures of other States have either dropped or become stagnant.

two States were the second and third biggest exporters of electronic goods, respectively. As can be seen from the chart, Tamil Nadu has considerably widened its gap with the other States. Exports of electronic goods from Gujarat and Maharashtra, the other States in the top five list, have stagnated in recent years.

Chart 3 shows the commodity-wise share in total exports from India for FY24 (till February) in \$ billion. In this period, India's exports were dominated by engineering goods (\$98 billion), followed by petroleum products (\$78 billion), gems and jewellery (\$30 billion), and electronics goods (\$25 billion). In FY18, however, exports of electronic goods were not even in the

On the cutting edge

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Import-Export Record for Yearly Analysis of Trade, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry



Chart 1: The chart shows the year-wise electronic goods exported from Tamil Nadu in \$ billion

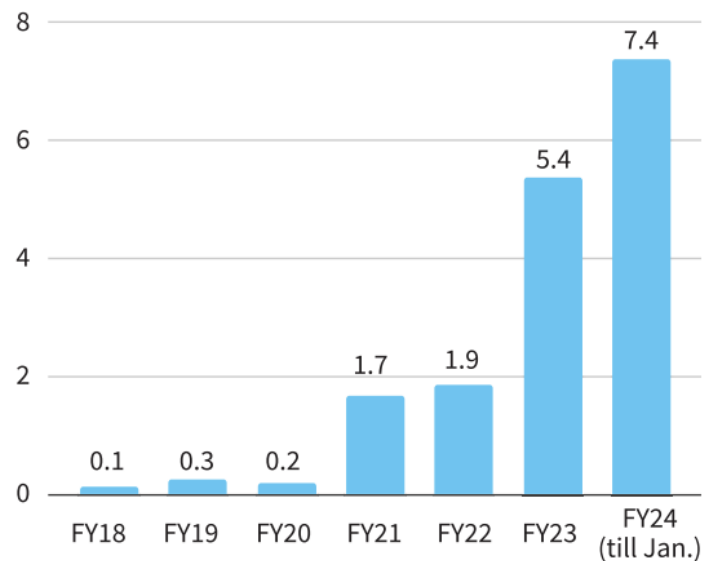


Chart 2: The chart shows the year-wise exports of electronic goods of the top five States in India in \$ billion

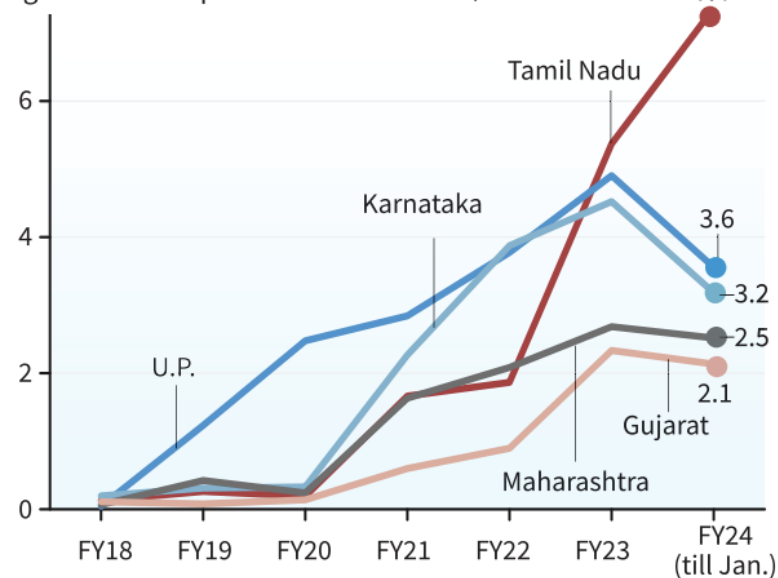


Chart 3: The chart shows the commodity-wise share in total exports from India for FY24 (till February) in \$ billion

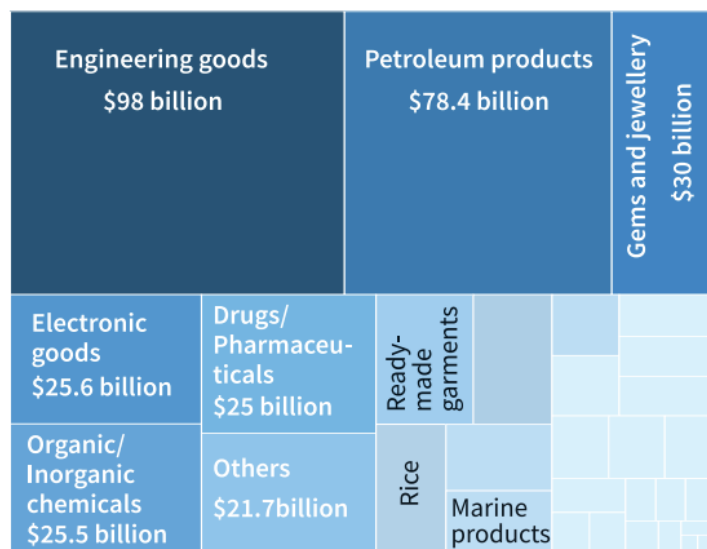
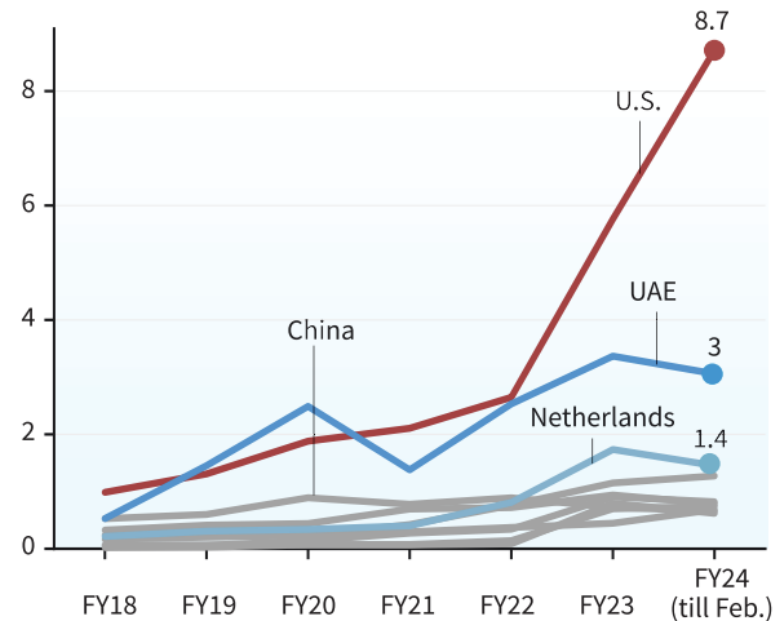


Chart 4: The chart shows the year-wise top 10 importers of electronics from India in \$ billion



INSIDE



RESIDENT MURMU CONFERS BHARAT RATNA ON BJP VETERAN L K ADVANI
MP RAPE-MURDER CONVICT ACCQUITTED AFTER TWO DEATH SENTENCES P 7, 12

155.8 kmph: Boy who grew up on Ambrose stories bursts into IPL scene



Maysank Yadav made his IPL debut for LSG on Saturday

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, MARCH 31

ONNY BARSTROW, who is used to facing express bowling, was in for a shock Saturday night when he was shaped to pull a back-of-length delivery from debutant Maysank Yadav. The ball nudged into the Englishman in a blur, resulting in a simple catch. This dismissal, and the subsequent wickets that the 21-year-old claimed with bouncers in a sensational spell of 3/27, including a ball that clocked 155.8 kmph, against Punjab Kings earned the heart of his father, habhu Yadav.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

AT RALLY, INDIA ASKS EC TO ENSURE LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

Opp rings alarm on free and fair polls, urges EC to step in and act



Opposition INDIA bloc leaders during the 'save democracy' rally at Ramilla Maidan in New Delhi on Sunday. *Adhiraj Saha*

If BJP wins 'match-fixing' election and changes Constitution, it will set the entire country on fire: Rahul Gandhi

JATINANAND & MANJUG
NEW DELHI, MARCH 31

WITH BARELY two-and-a-half weeks left before the first vote is cast in the 710 Lok Sabha elections, the Opposition INDIA bloc rally sent out a message Sunday that is set to harden the deadlines in the fractious campaign that lies ahead. It raised doubts about the fairness of the election process. Virtually questioning the legitimacy of poll process, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "trying to do match fixing" — in other words, to rig the poll process in favour of the ruling BJP. And, in an ominous underlining of the point, he

BUSINESS AS USUAL
By UNNY



warmer of the consequences. "If the BJP wins this match-fixing election and changes the Constitution after that, it will set the entire country on fire."

2 empty chairs for Kejriwal and Soren, wives Sumita, Kalpana take centre stage

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, MARCH 31

WITH TWO empty chairs reserved for Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren — leaders of their parties, they are currently behind bars in cases registered by the Enforcement Directorate — wives Sumita Kejriwal and Kalpana Soren took centre stage in more ways than one at the INDIA bloc rally in Delhi Sunday. Seated in the middle of the dais at Ramilla Maidan, where they were joined by Congress leader Sonia Gandhi later, leader Sonia Gandhi later,



Kalpana Soren and Sumita Kejriwal at the rally on Sunday. *Adhiraj Saha*

BJP SLAMS EVENT: 'SAVE FAMILY, HIDE CORRUPTION RALLY'
MOSAIC OF POLITICS AT RAMILLA MAIDAN
RELATED REPORTS, P 4

Opp trying to save corrupt, action no matter how big a person: PM

Attacks Cong for ceding island to Lanka: How can it be trusted with national security

VIKAS PATHAK
MEERUT, MARCH 31

AS THE INDIA bloc leaders gathered at the Ramilla Maidan in Delhi Sunday, days after the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by the Enforcement Directorate in the excise policy case, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a no-holds-barred attack on the Opposition, saying its leaders were trying to "save the corrupt" at a time when he was waging a war against corruption.

Ex-CECs: I-T, ED actions against Opp can disrupt level playing field in polls

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI, MARCH 31

WITH CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "match fixing" in the Lok Sabha polls by using central law enforcement agencies, at least three former Chief Election Commissioners (CECs) told *The Indian Express* that the recent actions of the Income Tax (IT) Department and Enforcement Directorate (ED) against opposition parties and their leaders have the potential to disrupt the level playing field during elections.

गौरव समारोह

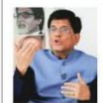


PM Narendra Modi with UP CM Adityanath, BJD chief Jayant Chaudhary and other NDA leaders in Meerut. *Gayatri Yadav*

EXPRESS NETWORK

KHARGE HITS BACK ON ISLAND CHARGE, CITES BANGLA LAND PACT
MODI DEFENDS POLL BONDS, FLAGS BID TO DISRUPT E.D. WORK P 9

Addressing a well-attended rally in Meerut, Modi said "action will be taken, no matter how big person the corrupt may be." He said his fight against corruption had made the Opposition lose its wits. "Modi's mantra is to liberate our nation (remove corruption); they CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



What the poll panel can do

IN 2019, amidst allegations from opposition parties that the BJP was leveraging central agencies against them, the EC issued an advisory urging the agencies to maintain impartiality. Consequently, if desired, the EC can convene meetings with officials from the agencies to inquire about the motivation behind their actions.

IDEA EXCHANGE
"We haven't put Kejriwal in jail. The law is catching up with those who did wrong."
PROHIBITORY UNDERSTANDING AND SIBLING-LIKE
PAGE 18

TIOL Awards to host Special Event for conferment of TIOL Kautilya Global Awards 2023 & TIOL Fiscal Heritage Award 2023

6th APRIL 2024 | HOTEL TAJ MAHAL, MANSINGH ROAD, NEW DELHI

CHIEF GUEST

SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
Hon'ble Former President of India

TIOL KAUTILYA GLOBAL AWARD 2023
for lifetime contribution to Economics & Policy-making

PROF JAGDISH N BHAGWATI
Indian American Economist from Columbia University, New York

TIOL FISCAL HERITAGE AWARD 2023
for lifetime contribution to Economics & Fiscal Space in India

DR VIJAY VEIKAR
Chairman, 18th Finance Commission

STATE PARTNER

Government of Rajasthan

Dignitaries To Speak About The Legacies Of The TIOL Kautilya Global & Fiscal Heritage Awards 2023 Recipients

PROF ARVIND PANAGARIYA
Chairman of 16th Finance Commission

MR LARRY H SUMMERS
Former United States Secretary of the Treasury

DR P THAGA RAJAN
Minister for IT & Digital Services, Tamil Nadu

DR C RANGARAJAN
Former Governor of RBI

PROF KLAUS SCHWAB
Chairman, World Economic Forum (WEF)

PROF LORD NICHOLAS STERN
of London School of Economics

TIOL Awards 2024
Nominations (Non-Deemed) & Voting (Deemed) open from 8th April, 2024

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**Pak Prime Minister
Shehbaz Sharif.** *AP*

PAKISTAN

No red carpets at official events to reduce costs

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has banned the use of red carpets at government events, reserving them exclusively for diplomatic receptions, as part of austerity measures to cut down unnecessary expenditures in the cash-strapped nation. Sharif expressed annoyance over the use of red carpets during the visits of federal ministers and senior authorities at government functions. The ban has been imposed on the use of red carpet on the PM's directives. According to a notification issued by the Cabinet division, the PM has instructed that the red carpet will not be used for federal ministers and government figures at official events. **PTI**

Green Elections in India

The background features a complex network of thin, light-colored lines connecting various sized circles. The circles are colored in a gradient from dark blue at the bottom left, through purple and red, to yellow and gold at the top right. The overall effect is a dense, organic-looking structure that resembles a neural network or a data visualization.

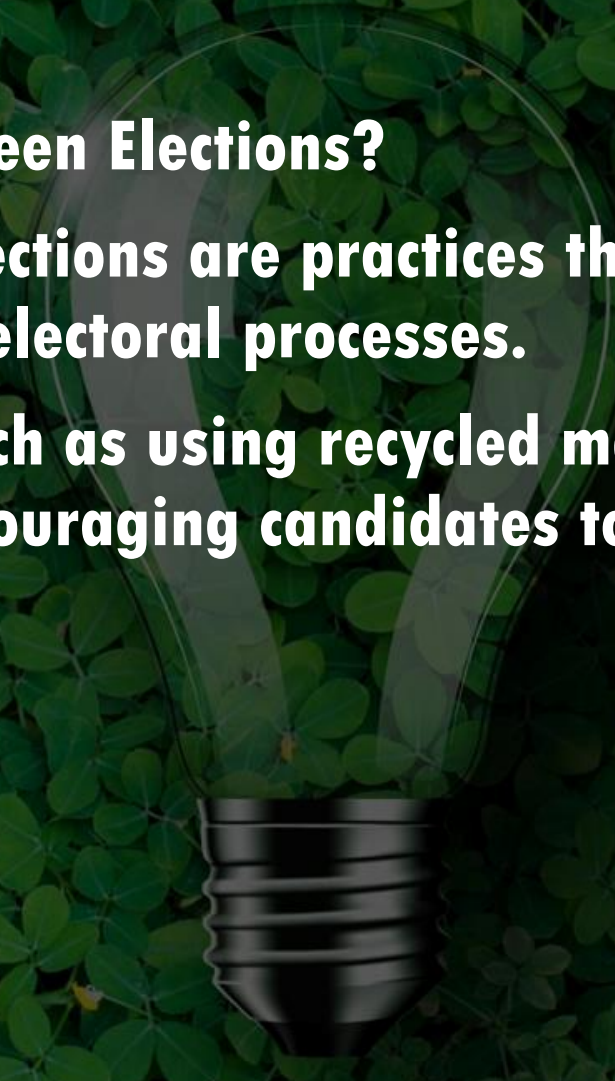
- 
- A person is holding a large, round, colorful basket made of woven fabric and beads. The basket features various colors including blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. The person's hands are visible at the bottom of the basket. The background is a patterned fabric with a geometric design in yellow, red, and black.
- Recently, the Election Commission of India (ECI) voiced its concern over the environmental risks associated with the use of non-biodegradable materials in elections.
 - It has been urging parties and candidates to avoid the use of plastic/polythene for preparation of election material during an election campaign, since 1999

- 
- **Why is There a Need for a Shift Toward Green Elections?**
 - **Environmental Footprint of Traditional Elections: Traditional election processes have significant environmental consequences due to various factors:**
 - **Campaign Flights: The emissions from campaign flights during elections contribute significantly to the overall carbon footprint.**
 - **For example: In the 2016 US presidential elections, the emissions from just one candidate's campaign flights were equivalent to the annual carbon footprint of 500 Americans.**

Deforestation and Other Issues : Reliance on paper-based materials for ballots, campaign literature, and administrative documents leads to deforestation and energy-intensive production processes.

Energy-Saving: Large-scale election rallies with loudspeakers, lighting, and other energy-consuming equipment contribute to energy consumption and emissions.

Waste Generation: PVC flex banners, hoardings, and disposable items used during campaigns add to waste generation and environmental impact.

- 
- A glowing lightbulb is centered in the image, set against a background of dense, vibrant green foliage. The lightbulb is illuminated from within, casting a soft glow. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.
- **What is the Concept of Green Elections?**
 - **Green Elections:** Green elections are practices that aim to reduce the environmental impact of electoral processes.
 - They involve measures such as using recycled materials, promoting electronic voting, and encouraging candidates to adopt sustainable campaign practices.

- What are Successful Examples of Eco-friendly Electoral initiatives?
- Example from India:
- Kerala's Green Campaign:
- During the 2019 general election, the Kerala State Election Commission took a proactive step by urging political parties to avoid single-use plastic materials during their campaigns.

Hepatitis B: A Public Health Concern In India

- A recent study by Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi, indicates that public awareness and knowledge regarding Hepatitis B, a potentially fatal disease leading to liver cirrhosis and cancer, is insufficient in India.
- What is Hepatitis?
- About:
- Hepatitis is the inflammation of the liver, characterised by irritation or swelling of the liver cells due to various causes.
 - **Liver inflammation can manifest as either acute, characterised by symptoms like jaundice, fever, and vomiting, or chronic, lasting over six months with no apparent symptoms.**

-

What is hepatitis?

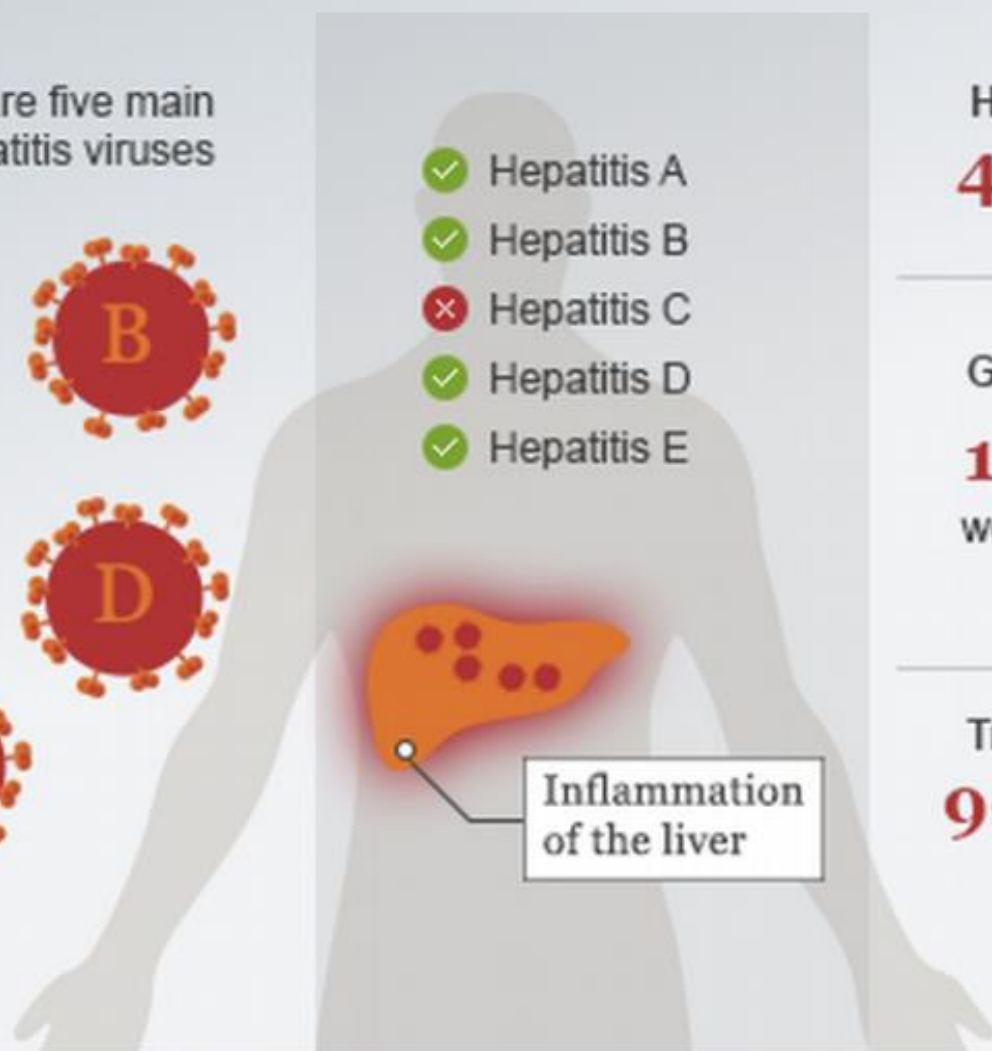
The A, B, C, D and E of hepatitis

There are five main hepatitis viruses



What vaccines are available for which types of hepatitis?

- ✓ Hepatitis A
- ✓ Hepatitis B
- ✗ Hepatitis C
- ✓ Hepatitis D
- ✓ Hepatitis E



Estimated cases world-wide (per year)

Hepatitis **B and C**:
400 million cases

Gradual death:
1.4 million people die worldwide from hepatitis every year

Treatment:
90% of hepatitis C patients can be healed within three to six months

How does the virus spread?



Hepatitis **A and E**:
Lack of food hygiene, contaminated water and sub-standard sanitary facilities



Hepatitis **B, C and D**:
Blood, sperm and other bodily fluids


- **Symptoms:**

- **Some individuals infected with hepatitis may not exhibit symptoms, but common ones include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, clay-coloured bowel movements, joint pain, and jaundice.**

-

Types of Hepatitis

	TRANSMISSION	PREVENTION	TREATMENT
Hepatitis A	Eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practicing good hygiene• Vaccine	No treatment
Hepatitis B	Through contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practicing good hygiene• Vaccine• Blood screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alpha interferon• Peginterferon
Hepatitis C	Blood-to-blood contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practicing good hygiene• Avoid sharing needles, toothbrushes, razors or nail scissors	Direct-acting antiviral drugs
Hepatitis D	Contact with infected blood (only occurs in people already infected with hepatitis B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hepatitis B vaccine• Avoid sharing needles, toothbrushes, razors or nail scissors	Interferon
Hepatitis E	Eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practicing good hygiene• Avoid drinking water that has come from a potentially unsafe source	No treatment

The background is a blurred, high-speed photograph of a road. The road surface is a mix of grey and blue tones, with a yellow light source at the top center, possibly a street lamp or a vehicle's headlight, creating a bright spot. The text is centered on the road.

Nimmu-Padam-Darcha Road in Ladakh

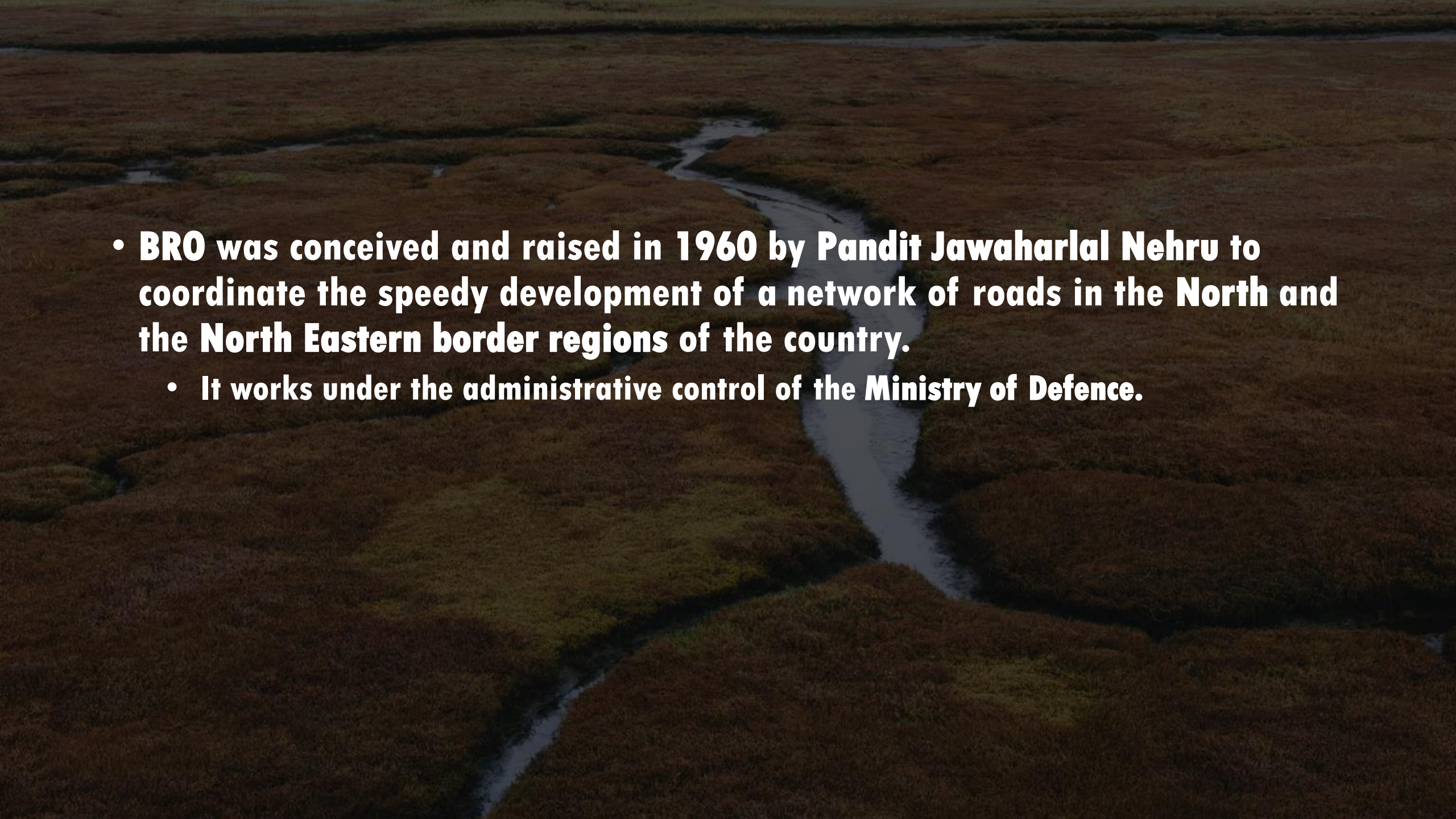
Recently, The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has achieved a significant milestone by connecting the strategic Nimmu-Padam-Darcha road in Ladakh.

This road serves as a crucial link between Manali and Leh, passing through Darcha and Nimmu along the Kargil–Leh highway.

It now stands as the third axis connecting Ladakh to the hinterland, alongside the existing Manali-Leh and Srinagar-Leh routes.

The road holds strategic importance due to its shorter distance compared to other routes.

It will provide all-weather connectivity to the Ladakh region. It crosses only one pass i.e. Shinkun La at an elevation of 16,558 feet where tunnel work is about to commence under the BRO's supervision.

- 
- **BRO was conceived and raised in 1960 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to coordinate the speedy development of a network of roads in the North and the North Eastern border regions of the country.**
 - **It works under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence.**

Map-03: NPD Road Alignment



The logo consists of a large white circle with a thin grey border, centered on a dark grey background. Inside the circle, the text "White Rabbit Collaboration" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, centered horizontally and vertically.

White Rabbit Collaboration

-
- **The European Organization for Nuclear Research or CERN** has launched the **White Rabbit Collaboration**.
 - **About**
 - **White Rabbit:** The technology is developed to **synchronise devices** in the **accelerators down to sub-nanoseconds** and solve the challenge of establishing a common notion of time across a network.

At a scale of billionths of a second, the time light takes to travel through a fibre-optic cable and the time the electronics take to process the signal are no longer negligible.



To avoid potential delays, the co-inventors of White Rabbit designed a **new ethernet switch.**

- **Application:**

- White Rabbit is used in the **finance sector** as well as in many **research infrastructures**, and it is currently being evaluated for application in the **future quantum internet**.
 - The technology could also play a key role in the future landscape of **global time dissemination technologies**, which currently rely heavily on satellites.

**MT TRILAT 24
EXERCISE**

The second edition of IMT TRILAT 24 Exercise was concluded at Nacala, Mozambique.

About

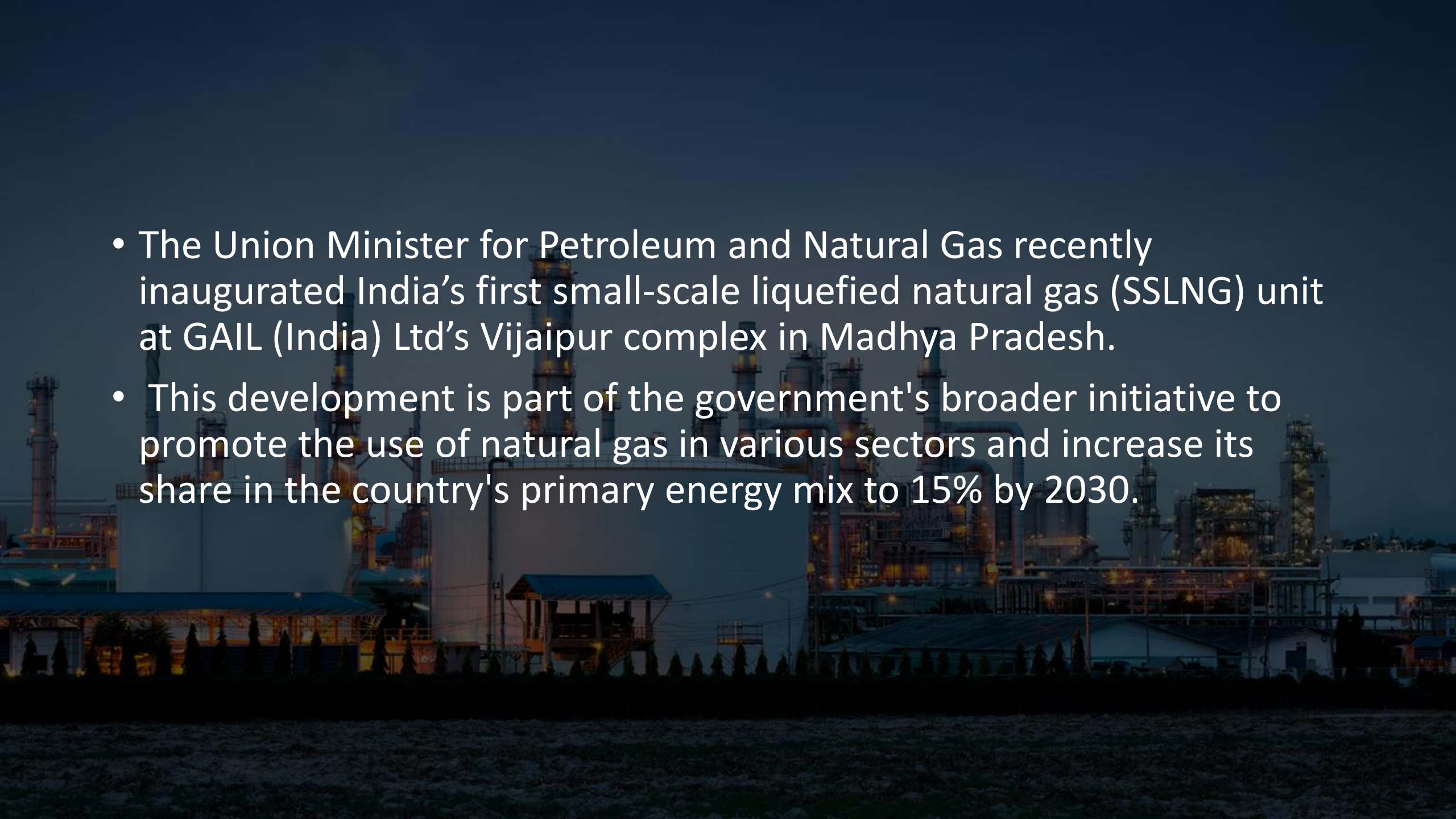
It is a **joint trilateral maritime exercise** between **India, Mozambique and Tanzania**.

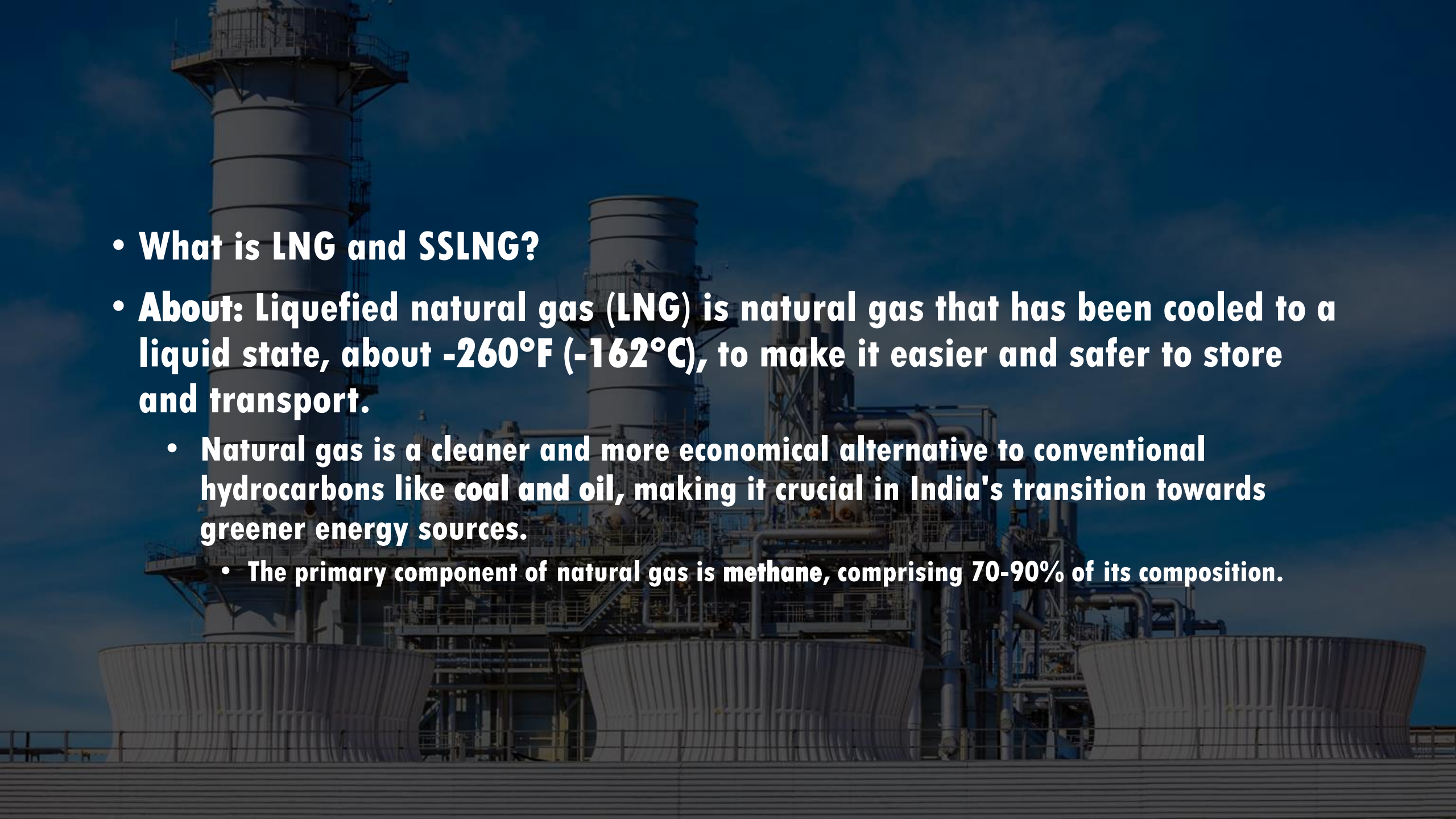
The **first edition** of the exercise was conducted in **2022**.

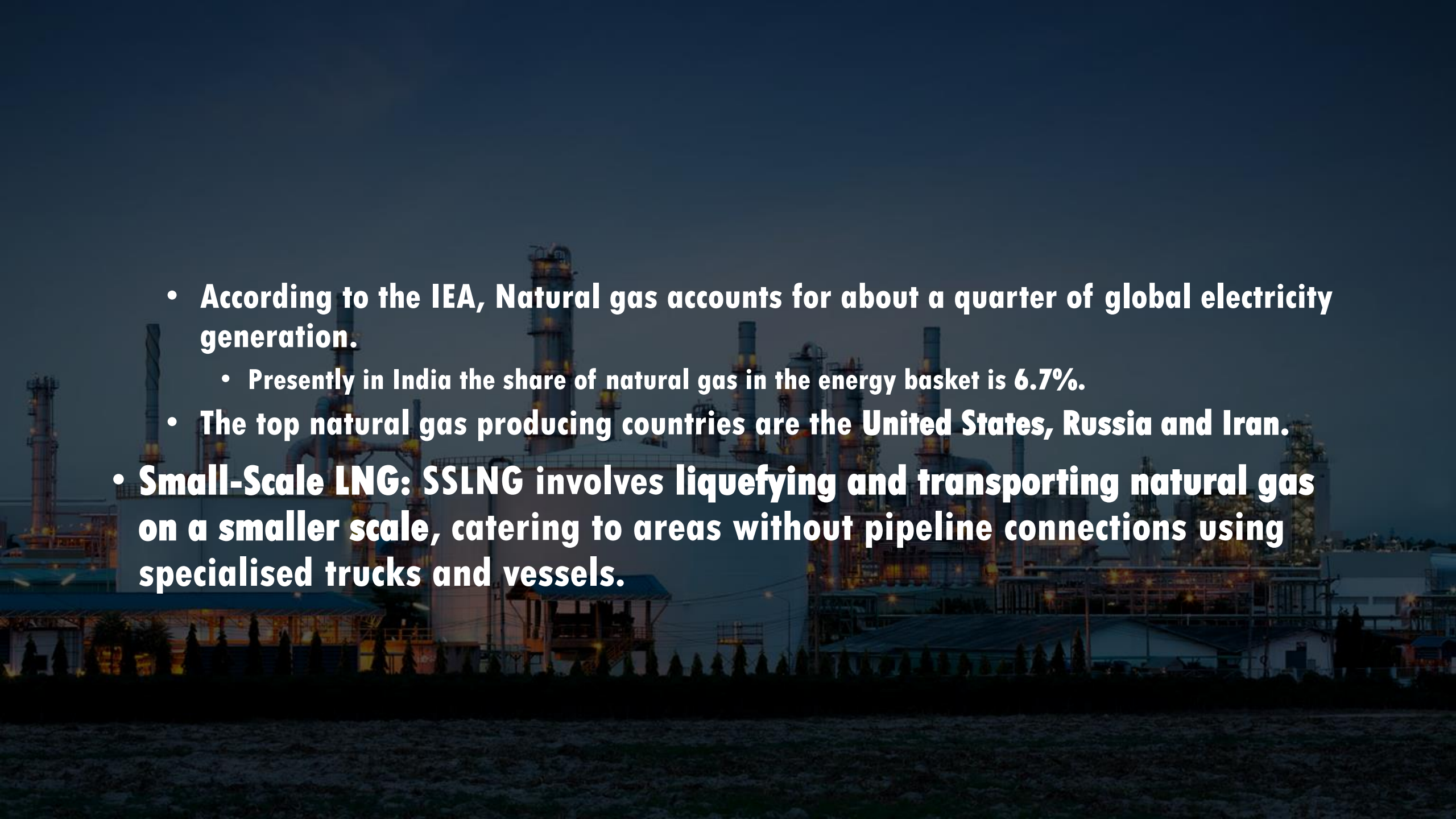
The joint operation was conducted in line with the **vision of SAGAR (Security & Growth for All in the Region)** off the southeast African coast.



India's First Small-Scale LNG Unit in Madhya Pradesh

- 
- The Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas recently inaugurated India's first small-scale liquefied natural gas (SSLNG) unit at GAIL (India) Ltd's Vijaipur complex in Madhya Pradesh.
 - This development is part of the government's broader initiative to promote the use of natural gas in various sectors and increase its share in the country's primary energy mix to 15% by 2030.

- 
- **What is LNG and SSLNG?**
 - **About: Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is natural gas that has been cooled to a liquid state, about -260°F (-162°C), to make it easier and safer to store and transport.**
 - **Natural gas is a cleaner and more economical alternative to conventional hydrocarbons like coal and oil, making it crucial in India's transition towards greener energy sources.**
 - **The primary component of natural gas is methane, comprising 70-90% of its composition.**

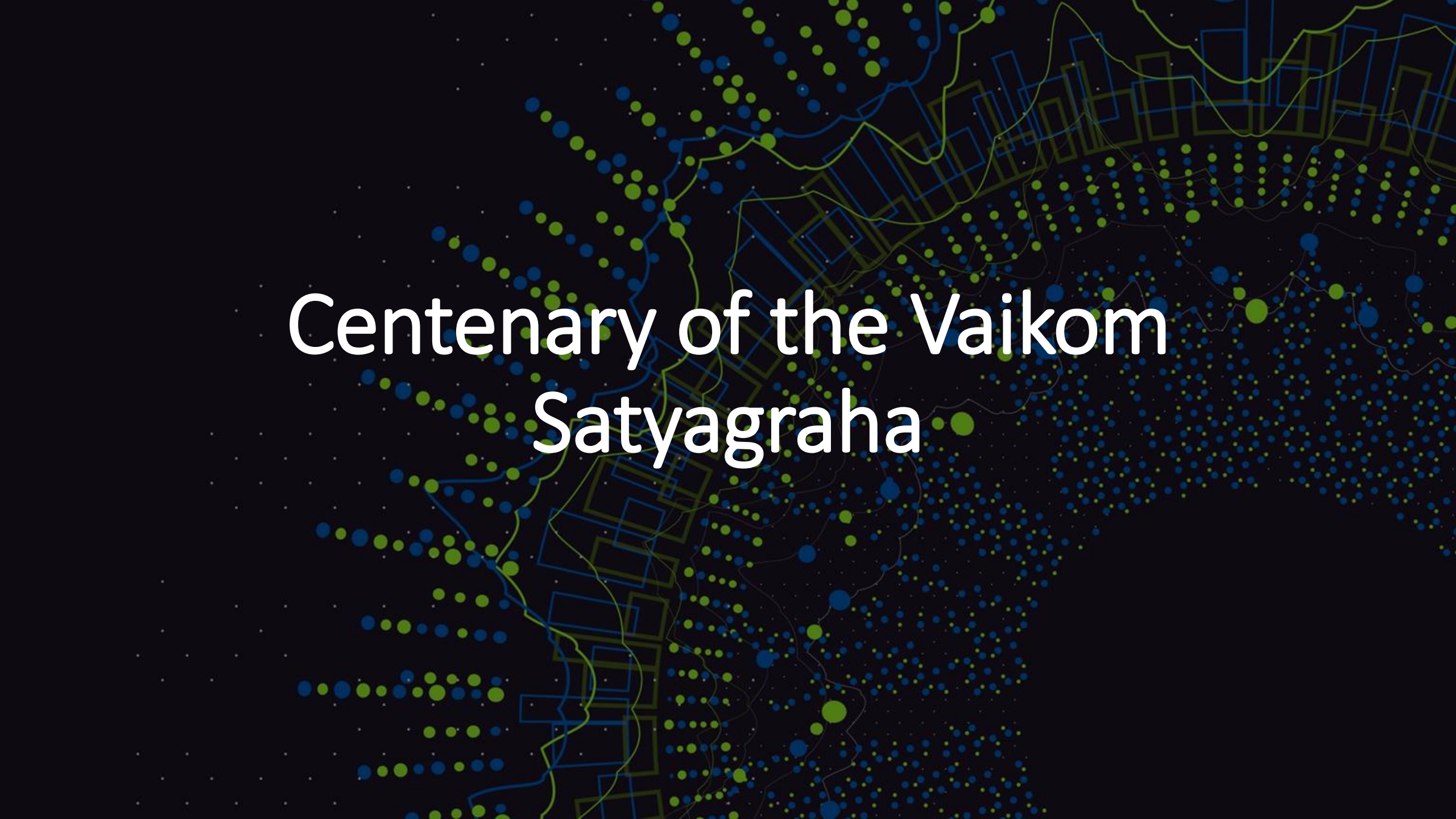
- 
- A photograph of an industrial facility, likely a refinery or gas processing plant, at night. The scene is illuminated by artificial lights, highlighting various structures, pipes, and towers against a dark sky. The foreground shows a dark, flat area, possibly a field or road.
- **According to the IEA, Natural gas accounts for about a quarter of global electricity generation.**
 - Presently in India the share of natural gas in the energy basket is **6.7%**.
 - The top natural gas producing countries are the **United States, Russia and Iran.**
 - **Small-Scale LNG: SSLNG involves liquefying and transporting natural gas on a smaller scale, catering to areas without pipeline connections using specialised trucks and vessels.**



Closing Ceremony of International Year of Millets

- Recently, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) hosted the closing ceremony of the International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023 at the FAO headquarters in Rome.
- The United Nations declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets following a proposal by India, supported by over 70 countries, to raise awareness about millets' benefits.
- The year-long celebration highlighted millets' nutritional benefits, adaptability to adverse climates, and role in creating sustainable market opportunities.

-
- **Millets are small-grained, annual, warm-weather cereals belonging to the grass family.**
 - **Jowar (Sorghum), Bajra (Pearl Millet) and Ragi (Finger millet) are the important millets cultivated in India.**
 - **Millets are the main crops in semiarid tropics due to low rainfall and poor soil fertility. They have higher nutrient content than major cereal crops and are tolerant to drought and extreme weather conditions.**

The background is a dark blue field filled with a complex pattern of small blue and green dots, larger green and blue circles, and thin, overlapping lines in blue and green. The lines form a dense, somewhat chaotic web, with some larger, faint rectangular shapes visible in the upper right quadrant.

Centenary of the Vaikom Satyagraha

- **Background:** Vaikom was a temple town in the princely state of Travancore. The low-caste Hindus were not allowed to enter into the temples.
- The issue of temple entry was first raised by **Ezhava leader T K Madhavan** in a 1917 editorial in his paper **Deshabhimani**.
 - In the **1923 session of the INC in Kakinada**, a resolution was passed by the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee to take up **anti-untouchability as a key issue**.
 - Vaikom, with its revered Shiva temple, was chosen as the location for the very first satyagraha.
 - Vaikom Satyagraha was the first among temple entry movements in India
 - It lasted for 604 days (20 months) from March 30, 1924 to November 23, 1925



Reasons:The princely state of Travancore had a “feudal, militaristic, and ruthless system of custom-ridden government.

The idea of caste pollution worked not only on the basis of touch but also sight — lower castes were forbidden entry to any “pure” place, such as temples and the roads surrounding them.




Prominent Leaders : The movement, led by TK Madhavan, EVR Periyar, MK Gandhi, and Narayana Guru.



Temple Entry Proclamation : In **November 1936**, the Maharaja of Travancore signed the historic Temple Entry Proclamation which removed the age-old ban on the entry of marginalised castes into the temples of the state.

The Vaikom Satyagraha proclaimed its significance almost a decade later when in November 1936, the **historic Temple Entry Proclamation** was passed, which lifted the age-old orthodox ban on the entry of marginalized depressed castes into the temples of Travancore.



It was also a **great opportunity for the Indian National Congress Party** to Grow in Kerala.



It became the **first struggle for human rights in India.**



Afar Depression

Geologists predict that the **African continent's rift in the Afar Triangle** could lead to the **formation of a new ocean in 5 to 10 million years.**

About

The Afar Triangle is also known as the **Afar Depression**, located in the **Horn of Africa.**

The Afar Triangle is a geological depression where **three tectonic plates—the Nubian, Somali, and Arabian plates— converge.**



The image features three large radio telescope dishes arranged in a row on a dark, rocky terrain. The sky above is a deep blue, filled with a dense field of stars, including the prominent white and blue stars of the Milky Way galaxy. The text 'UNESCO Global Geoparks Network' is centered in white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

UNESCO Global Geoparks Network

UNESCO's Executive Board has endorsed the addition of 18 sites to the UNESCO Global Geoparks network. Geoparks – UNESCO Global Geoparks are areas with internationally important rocks and landscapes, all of which are managed responsibly for conservation, education and sustainable development.

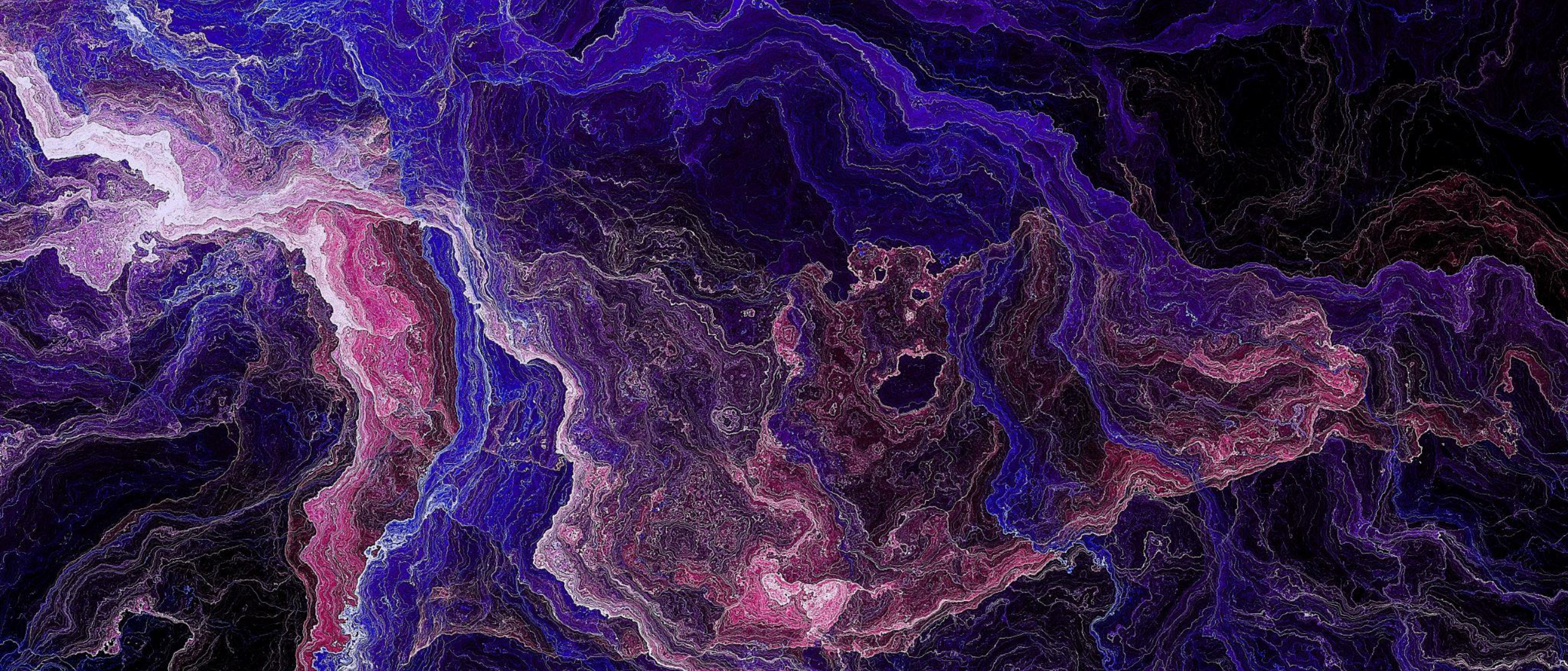


With Geology at its foundation, UNESCO Global Geoparks build upon by bringing together other aspects of heritage such as archaeology, history, culture and biodiversity.

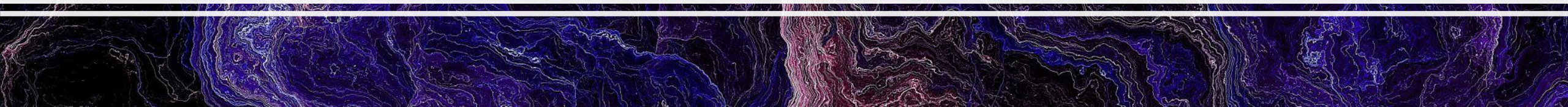
Global Geoparks Network (GGN) In 2004, 17 European and 8 Chinese geoparks came together at UNESCO headquarters in Paris to form the Global Geoparks Network (GGN).

The Global Geoparks Network was founded under the umbrella of UNESCO. Headquarters –

Paris During the 38th session of UNESCO's General Conference in 2015, the 195 Member States of UNESCO ratified the creation of a new label, the UNESCO Global Geoparks.



Fun fact



A large pepperoni pizza is shown on a metal tray. The pizza is topped with melted cheese and several slices of pepperoni. A pizza cutter is visible in the bottom right corner of the frame. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on the pizza.

#1

Americans eat approximately how much pizza per day?

- A. 100 slices per second
- B. 150 slices per second
- C. 275 slices per second
- D. 350 slices per second

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A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, with some wearing watches. The background is blurred, showing more people and a window. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner.

Thank you
guys.
