

Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता

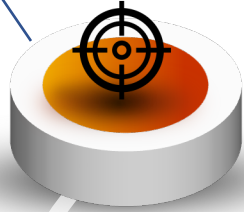


The Indian EXPRESS

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

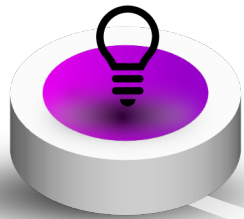


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The Hindu

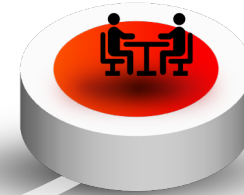


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PIB, PR4 & Other newspaper

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The Indian Express




Financial Express



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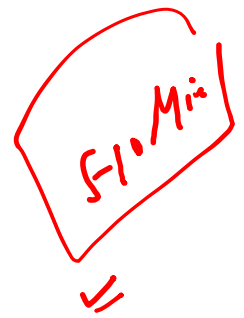
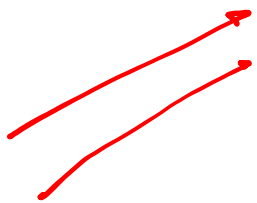

Class pdf


**10 Questions
test related to
this class**

**Life moves pretty fast.
If you don't stop
and look around once in a while,
you could miss it.**

Ferris, from Ferris Bueller's Day Off

EVERYDAY **POWER**



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Modi, Mamata square off in Bengal
PASWAN ACCUSED OF NEPOTISM
LJP(RV) brass quit party ahead of poll
NEWS » PAGE 4



PMI DATA
Services hit 13.5-year high in March
BUSINESS » PAGE 12



PARLEY
Bengaluru water crisis is a wake-up call
OPINION » PAGE 9



SIZZLING CHARGE
Shashank swings it Punjab Kings' way
SPORT » PAGE 16

INSIDE

Court reserves judgment in BRS leader's bail plea
NEW DELHI
A Delhi court on Thursday reserved its order on the interim bail application filed by Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K. Kanha, who was arrested in a money laundering case filed in connection with the exit policy. » PAGE 3

CP(M) releases manifesto, calls for 'right to work'
NEW DELHI
The CP(M) has released its election manifesto on Thursday, calling for inclusion of 'right to work' as a constitutional right. » PAGE 5

'Israel must ensure safety of Indian workers'
NEW DELHI
India has urged Israel to ensure the safety and security of Indian citizens who are being flown under the contract hit nation to work as blue-collar workers under a diplomatic agreement, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randeep Jaiswal said on Thursday. » PAGE 6

Rebels launch drone attacks on Myanmar capital
BANGKOK
The main anti-democracy resistance group in Myanmar claimed that it launched drone attacks on the airport and a military headquarters in the capital, Naypyitaw, but the ruling military said it destroyed the drones. » PAGE 14

Will build presence in the South: Gadkari

Ahijay Deshpande
NAGPUR
The Congress is synonymous with corruption and scandals, while the BJP epitomises development, administration and good governance, Union Minister Eknath Gadkari said in an interview with *The Hindu*. Mr. Gadkari said the Congress remains united in its ideological commitment, with no discord between the party and the RSS. The Union Minister said the BJP aims to strengthen its foothold in the southern States. "Presently, we hold significant seats in Telangana; our alliance in Tamil Nadu is poised to secure a substantial number of



Govt. to record parents' religion to register births

Current practice is to record the religion of only the child's family while registering births

Vijaya Singh
NEW DELHI
When registering the birth of a child, parents will now be required to separately record the religion of the father and mother, according to the del Rules drafted by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. These Rules will have to be adopted and notified by the State governments before they are implemented. Earlier, only the family's religion was recorded in birth registers. The proposed "Form No.1 Birth Report" will expand the column requiring a tick mark, selection "for religion" of the child to now al-

Under the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023, the birth and death database may be used to update the National Population Register, Aadhaar number, ration card, passport, driving licence, property registry and such other databases as may be notified.

According to the new, which became effective October 1 last year, as reported births and deaths in the country are to be digitally registered through the Centre's portal for the Civil Registration System (CRS.gov.in). The digital birth certificates issued under this system will become a single document to prove the date of birth for various services, including admission to educational institutions. The office of the Registrar General of India (RGI) under the Union

The database may be used to update NPB voter rolls, Aadhaar, ration cards, passport

available, locality, house number, and PIN code. The "information" providing the information will also have to provide their Aadhaar and mobile numbers, and email address, along with the name and address details which were earlier required. **Data sharing** According to the 2023 amendment, the RGI shall maintain the database of registered births and deaths at the national level and it is obligatory upon the Chief Registrars and the Registrars to share the data of registered births and deaths to such a database. According to the parent Act - the Registration of

National database

All reported births and deaths are to be digitally registered through the Centre's portal for the Civil Registration System. The database may be made available to other authorities preparing or maintaining other databases such as electoral rolls or ration cards. Information from digital certificate can be used for purposes such as admission to an educational institution or appointment to government posts.

Home Ministry has proposed substituting the existing forms related to the registration of births, deaths, still births, adoptions, and the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death as per the draft rules. The certificate will also include the

"history of illness, if any" from now on, apart from the actual cause of death.

Statistical and legal info Any birth register includes two parts: legal information and statistical information. The information on the parents' religion is to be birth register for statistical information.

The birth register form pertaining to legal information has been expanded to record the Aadhaar number, and the mobile and e-mail IDs of both the parents, "if available". The address box has been made more descriptive to contain the name of the State, district, sub-district, town or village, ward number (in case of town and if

Priming for polls



55 companies' electoral bond donations topped the 7.5% cap in 2022-24

Prasenjit Bose
The Hindu Data Team
KOLKATA/CHENNAI

The Supreme Court's February 15 verdict on electoral bonds (EBs) had held the deletion of a provision contained in Section 182 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013, which enabled unlisted corporate contributors to political parties "violative of Article 19 of the Indian constitution". The provision had restricted corporate donations to a cap of 7.5% of the donor companies' average profits in the three preceding financial years. Based on an analysis, the electoral bond data relating to 385 companies that had donated bonds totalling ₹5,362.2 crore to the ruling BJP, the highest recipient of electoral bond do-



donations, 55 firms were found to have made donations that exceeded the original 7.5% cap in 2022-23 and 2023-24. The total amount donated above the rescinded 7.5% cap figure stood at ₹1,377.9 crore, which was more than 69% of their aggregate donation of ₹1,993 crore. The BJP alone received close to 71%, or ₹1,414 crore, of the total donations. The analysis by *The Hindu* and an independent re-

BJP ignored RBI advice: Congress
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday alleged that the BJP government came up with the electoral bond scheme despite the Reserve Bank of India's advice against it. » PAGE 4

search team was based on bond data and publicly available financials for 221 of the 385 firms, for which information was available from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's Process IQ Database. Specifically, the EB donation data of these firms from 2019-20 to 2023-24 was matched against their financial data from 2016-17 to 2022-23. **FULL REPORT** » PAGE 7

Katchatheevu problem was 'resolved' 50 years ago, says Sri Lanka

Megra Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka sees no reason for re-opening talks on Katchatheevu that India gave up 50 years ago, Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Ali Sabry has said, in the first official reaction yet to the recent remarks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on the island. "This is a problem discussed and resolved 50 years ago and there is no necessity to have further



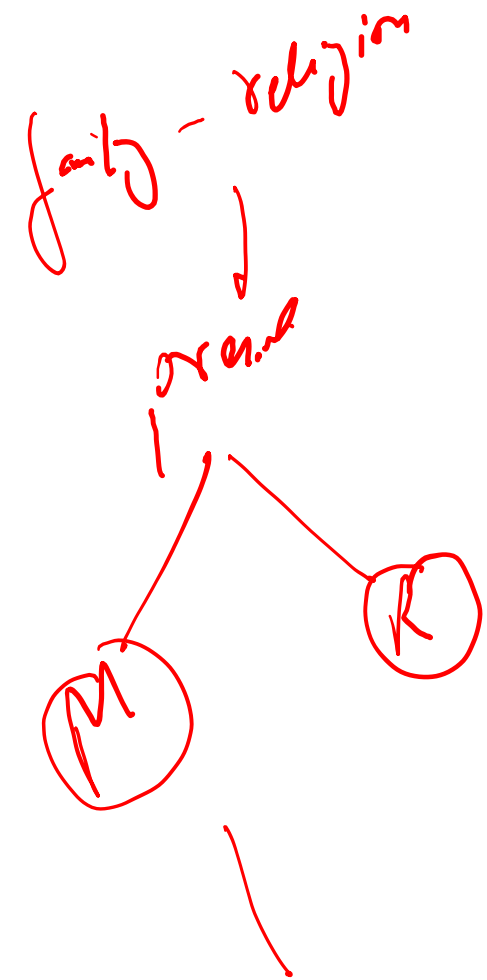
discussions on this," Mr. Sabry told a local news television channel on Wednesday. Earlier, Colombo-based official sources told *The Hindu* that the Ramil Wickremesinghe administration refrained from commenting on the development, as it was a clash between two political parties in the run-up to elections. "The comments are

questioning anonymity owing to the "sensitivity" of the issue.

Meanwhile, some in Sri Lanka, including mainstream media and former diplomats, have slammed the remarks of Mr. Modi and Mr. Jaishankar, terming them a "provocation". **Long-enduring conflict** Enduring, fishermen's groups in northern Sri Lanka accused the Indian leaders of turning the spotlight away from the long-enduring conflict among fishermen of both countries.

For several years now, they have voiced concern over the marine resources in the Palk Strait, said to be depleting owing to over-fishing by bottom trawlers used by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters.

Even before the signing of the two agreements in 1974 and 1976 that sealed the territorial question of Katchatheevu, Sri Lanka's position on the tiny island in the Palk Strait was unambiguous, according to Prof. V. Suryanarayana, founding Director and Senior Professor (retired), Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Madras. In an in-depth two-part analysis of the history of the Katchatheevu dispute, published in *Frontline* magazine in 1992, he wrote about "New Delhi's ambivalence", contrasting it with successive Colombo governments' "constant stand" on the matter. **RELATED REPORTS** » PAGES 2 & 4



Govt. to record parents' religion to register births

Current practice is to record the religion of only the child's family while registering births

Model Rules draft includes provisions requiring parents to separately declare their religion

The database may be used to update NPR, voter rolls, Aadhaar, ration cards, passport

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

When registering the birth of a child, parents will now be required to separately record the religion of the father and mother, according to Model Rules drafted by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. These Rules will have to be adopted and notified by the State governments before they are implemented.

Earlier, only the family's religion was recorded in birth registers. The proposed "Form No.1-Birth Report" will expand the column requiring a tick mark selection "for religion" of the child to now al-

so state the "religion of father" and "religion of mother".

Under the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023, the birth and death database may be used to update the National Population Register, electoral rolls, Aadhaar number, ration card, passport, driving licence, property registration, and such other databases as may be notified.

According to the law, which became effective October 1 last year, all reported births and deaths in the country are to be digitally registered through the Centre's portal for the Civil Registration System (crsorgi.gov.in).

The digital birth certifi-

National database

All reported births and deaths are to be digitally registered through the Centre's portal for the Civil Registration System

- The database may be made available to other authorities preparing or maintaining other databases such as electoral rolls or ration cards

- Information from digital certificate can be used for purposes such as admission to an educational institution or appointment to government posts



- Data is used by the govt. for socio-economic planning and to evaluate the effectiveness of social sector programmes

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Home Ministry has proposed substituting the existing forms related to the registration of births, deaths, still births, adoptions, and the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death as per the draft rules. The certificate will also include the

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available), locality, house number, and PIN code.

The "informant" providing the information will also have to provide their Aadhaar and mobile numbers, and email address, along with the name and address details which were earlier required.

Data sharing

According to the 2023 amendment, the RGI shall maintain the database of registered births and deaths at the national level and it is obligatory upon the Chief Registrars and the Registrars to share the data of registered births and deaths to such a database.

According to the parent Act – the Registration of

Births and Deaths Act, 1969 – the RGI has been empowered to take steps to coordinate and unify the activities of Chief Registrars, who are appointed by State governments.

Civil Registration System (CRS) functionaries are appointed up to panchayat level. The CRS data is also used to compile the annual 'Vital Statistics of India Based On The Civil Registration System' report, which makes public data regarding sex-ratio at birth, infant mortality, stillbirths and deaths, at national level. Such data is used by the government for socio-economic planning and to evaluate the effectiveness of various social sector programmes.

55 companies' electoral bond donations topped the 7.5% cap in 2022-24

Prasenjit Bose
The Hindu Data Team
KOLKATA/CHENNAI

The Supreme Court's February 15 verdict on electoral bonds (EBs) had held the deletion of a provision contained in Section 182 (1) of the Companies Act, 2013, which enabled unlimited corporate contributions to political parties as "violative of Article 14 of the Indian constitution".

The provision had restricted corporate donations to a cap of 7.5% of the donor companies' average net profits in the three preceding financial years. The Finance Act, 2017, had deleted the provision.

Based on an analysis, the electoral bond data relating to 385 companies that had donated bonds totalling ₹5,362.2 crore to the ruling BJP, the highest recipient of electoral bond do-



The total amount donated above the cap figure stood at ₹1,377.9 crore. GETTY IMAGES

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FULL REPORT
» **PAGE 7**

(SK) →
Finance Act 2017
Section 182(1)
2013
CSK

(CSK) →
Corporate donation
CSK
2-
7.5% → CSK

PM (Govt)
Political

CAUSE & EFFECT

■ Under the Companies Act, 2013, certain class of profitable entities is required to shell out at least 2% of their three-year annual average net profit towards CSR activities in a particular financial year

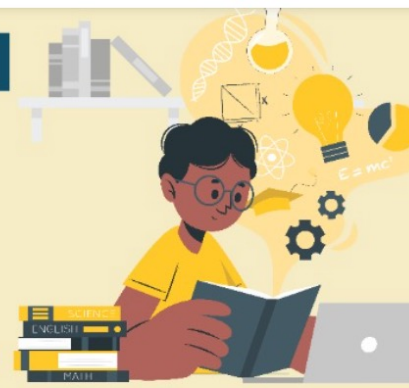
■ Companies having a net worth of at

least ₹500 crore or a minimum turnover of ₹1,000 crore or net profit of ₹5 crore or more during the immediately preceding financial year have to spend on CSR activities

■ CSR provision under the companies law came into effect from April 1, 2014



Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)



Why in news?

The excessive CSR expenditure before FY21 cannot be set off against future expenditure, according to Ministry of Corporate Affairs.



Origin in India

CSR has been made mandatory under Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Condition for CSR

- A company has to spend at least 2% of their average net profit made during the 3 preceding financial years.
- It applies to companies:
 - Having a net worth of Rs 500 crores or more, or
 - Having a turnover of Rs 1,000 crores or more, or
 - Having a net profit of Rs 5 crores or more

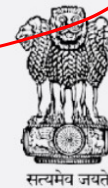
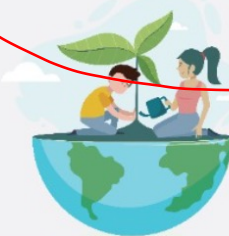
Activities

- Eradicating Hunger, Poverty and Malnutrition
- Promoting Education
- Environment protection
- Protection of national heritage, art and culture



What is not CSR?

- The CSR activities that only benefit employees of the companies and their families.
- Contribution of any amount directly or indirectly to any political party.



सत्यमेव जयते

#UPSC #CSE

IN BRIEF



Mumbai police take custody of 9 Somalis held for piracy

All the nine Somalis apprehended in a recent anti-piracy operation have been handed over to the Mumbai police, the Navy said on Thursday. They were brought to India on Wednesday, days after the Navy arrested them for hijacking an Iranian fishing vessel off the Somalia coast, a Navy official said.

Agni-Prime ballistic missile flight-test is successful

The new generation ballistic missile Agni-Prime was successfully flight-tested by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) along with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from the Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Orissa on Wednesday.

Median cancer diagnosis age in India is lower than in West

The Hindu Bureau CHENNAI

The median age for cancer diagnosis in India is lower when compared with the U.S., the U.K., and China, said a report released by Apollo Hospitals. According to the hospital's data, the average age of diagnosis of breast cancer in India is 52 against 63 in the U.S. and the U.K., while for lung cancer it is 59 as opposed to around 70 in the West.



The hospital found that colon cancer cases were increasing among younger people.

The fourth edition of Apollo Hospitals' "Health of the Nation" report, which looks at trends in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) based on the hospital's data, has highlighted the huge burden of cancers among the country's younger population and risk posed by low cancer-screening rates.

Looking at their data, the hospital found that colon cancer cases were increasing among younger people, with 30% of colon cancer patients at Apollo Hospitals aged less than 50 years. But the country falls behind in cancer screening.

Most nations have

No sanctions against India for buying, refining Russian oil, say U.S. officials

The aim of sanctions and the oil 'price cap' is to limit revenue to Russia, say the U.S. officials. India's oil purchases are only mandated by country's needs and it seeks to buy them from wherever they are available at the cheapest rate, says Centre

Subhasini Haider NEW DELHI

Striking a conciliatory note on India's imports of Russian oil, U.S. Treasury Department officials visiting Delhi said on Thursday that the aim of the U.S. sanctions and the oil "price cap" was not to limit the purchase of Russian "Ural" oil, but to limit the revenues made by the "Kremlin".



Trade ties: Since the war in Ukraine began in 2022, India and China have become the major purchasers of Russian oil. FILE PHOTO

According to the officials, who are meeting their counterparts and oil company representatives in Delhi and Mumbai during their visit on April 2 and April 5, the U.S. measures thus far, including a "second phase" of sanctions against oil shipping companies, are having some impact. However, they brushed aside questions about the rising price of "Ural" oil, now nearing \$80 per barrel, and the narrowing of Russian discounts to Indian refiners.

Asked about the U.S. officials' visit, and India's stand on the price cap, the External Affairs Ministry said that all oil purchases were only mandated by India's needs. "Anything to do with energy security and oil purchases on the international market are guided by India's energy requirements," it said. This is essentially a commercial venture, and we are seeking to be oil self-sufficient wherever we receive the cheapest available supplies, Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Thursday.

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions. Clues include: 15 Orderly coverage for Republican President in the past (5), 16 Hotel bar, appropriate place to review part of the story (7), 19 With some money allow fresh resumption (7), 20 In fact, a million literary works are there in this language (5), 23 Imagine a model wearing an exotic bonnet (5,4), 24 And gets set amou... includes interest (7), 26 Choice, encountered in fall (7), 28 Give back 80% immediately outside the French city (7), 29 Sarmaphrodite's story, direction follows (7). Solutions are provided for several clues.

Sudoku puzzle grid with some numbers filled in. A difficulty rating of five stars is shown. Below the grid, there are solutions for previous puzzles and a solution to yesterday's Sudoku.

Ramayana tattvas section. Title: FAITH Ramayana tattvas. Text: The story of the Ramayana is simple, and we have the Eka sloki Ramayana - the entire Ramayana summed up in one verse. But the significance of Ramayana lies not so much in the story as such, but in the deeper tattvas in the epic said M.A. Venkatakrishtan in a discourse. The shloka that is recited before Ramayana parayana shows us the importance attached to Ramayana tattvas. The shloka says that Valmiki is beside Rama. He is seated on a lotus made of flowers, which is a huge golden mandapa, which is in the middle of a garden full of trees. Rama's sit posture is veerasana. Hanuman recalls the incidents described in the Ramayana. Also present are Rama's brothers, and rishis. As Hanuman reads each incident, Rama explains the tattva behind each. The tattvas as elaborated by Rama have been handed down by rishis generation after generation, and have come to us through our Acharyas. Because these tattvas are very important, they have to be learnt from a preceptor. Ramanujacharya spent a year studying the Ramayana from his maternal uncle Thirumal Nambi, because to fully grasp the tattvas in the Ramayana, we need instruction from an Acharya for a long period. Ramanujacharya was capable of even correcting his teacher Yadavaprakasa's interpretations of Upanishad vakyas. The Vedas are not easily comprehended. The Ramayana, on the other hand, is written in simple Sanskrit, and can easily be understood. And yet Ramanujacharya studied the Ramayana for a year to grasp its tattvas.

Class 11 and 12 exams to focus on checking concept clarity: CBSE

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The exams for Classes 11 and 12 from the 2024-25 session will include more competency based questions that assess the application of concepts in real-life situations, according to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) officials, who announced a change in the format.

While the percentage of Competency Based Education in schools, ranging from aligning assessments to competencies, development of exemplar questions for teachers and students as well as continuous assessment building of the teachers," Joseph Emmanuel, Director (Academics), CBSE, said.

The main emphasis of the board was to create an educational ecosystem that would move away from rote memorisation and towards learning that is focused on developing the creative, critical, and systems thinking capacities of students," he added.

He said the board is continuing with asking of the assessments and evaluation practices with NEP-2020 for the academic session 2024-2025. There is no change in the exam format for Classes 9 and 10.

Fali Nariman was a pillar of the community, says CJI

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

During difficult times, when many fell silent, senior advocate Fali S. Nariman's baritone resonated in the walls of the court building, Chief Justice of India D.V. Chandrachud said on Thursday.

The Chief Justice was paying tribute to Nariman at a Full Court Reference held in his memory. The jurist passed away on February 27, 2022.

Chief Justice Chandrachud said Nariman, who was vocal in his support of civil liberties and rights, represented the "conscience of the nation" in hard times. "Every now and then a law practitioner advocates to become a pillar of the community," the CJI said at the ceremony held in his past courtroom at the Supreme Court, with judges, lawyers, and family members of Nariman, including his son and former Supreme Court judge, Justice Rohinton Nariman, in attendance.



Fali S. Nariman

cluding his son and former Supreme Court judge, Justice Rohinton Nariman, in attendance.

The Chief Justice recalled that Nariman resigned as Additional Solicitor-General with the imposition of the Internal Emergency in June 1975. "As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, 'courage asks the question, 'Is it right?' and expediency asks the question, 'Is it politic?', vanity asks the question, 'Is it popular?', but conscience asks the question, 'Is it right?' Nariman was guided by only one ques-

Israel must ensure safety of Indian workers: govt.

Subhasini Haider Kallol Bhattacharjee NEW DELHI

India has urged Israel to ensure the safety and security of Indian citizens who are being flown to the conflict-hit nation under a government-to-government (G2G) agreement to work as blue-collar workers. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on Thursday.

Mr. Jaiswal added that India was "distrusted" at the recent attack on Iranian diplomatic premises in Damascus that both Syria and Iran blamed on Tel Aviv.

"As you are aware, these [first batch] workers have gone to Israel as part of a mobility agreement that we have signed with the country. This agreement predates the conflict. We are conscious of their safety. We have urged the Israeli authorities to ensure their safe return as well-being," Mr. Jaiswal said.

Israel and India had signed an agreement to fly around 42,000 workers from here to various spots in Israel.

Earlier this week, the first batch of 60 Indian workers flew to Israel on Tuesday.

tion," the CJI said.

The CJI narrated a joke that Nariman used to share about two lawyers meeting at the court library during the Emergency period, each exhorting the other to speak first.

He recounted that Nariman had fought in favour of the Delhi High Court's judgment (on gay men's homosexuality). But the Supreme Court had given orders to set aside the High Court order. It was only years later, through its judgment in the Navtej Singh Johar case, that the top court corrected its error and confirmed the High Court verdict.

"Amongst the very best" of the hallmarks of a great lawyer is not one who wins, but one who fights well and, in doing so, furthers the judges' own understanding of the issues. Nariman was amongst the very best," the Chief Justice said.

Agni-Prime ballistic missile flight-tested successfully

The new generation ballistic missile Agni-Prime was successfully flight-tested by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) along with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from the Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha around 7 p.m. on Wednesday. “The test met all the trial objectives validating its reliable performance, as confirmed from the data captured by a number of range sensors, including two downrange ships placed at the terminal point,” the Defence Ministry said. It was witnessed by the Chief of Defence Staff, Chief of SFC, and officials from DRDO and the Army.

Night launch of 'Agni Prime' missile successful

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

INDIA HAS successfully carried out a night launch of new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile 'Agni Prime' from the Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha, boosting the country's strategic deterrence capability.

The defence ministry said the test-flight was carried out on Wednesday evening and it met all the trial objectives, validating the reliable performance, as confirmed from the data captured by a number of range sensors deployed at different locations.

The Strategic Forces Command (SFC), along with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), carried out the flight test of the missile that has a strike range of 1,000 to 2,000 km.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO, SFC and the armed forces and



'Agni Prime' being flight-tested from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha on Thursday. PTI

said the induction of the missile will be an excellent force multiplier for the military. The launch was witnessed by Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan, the Chief of Strategic Forces Command and senior officials from the DRDO and the Army.

1000-2000km

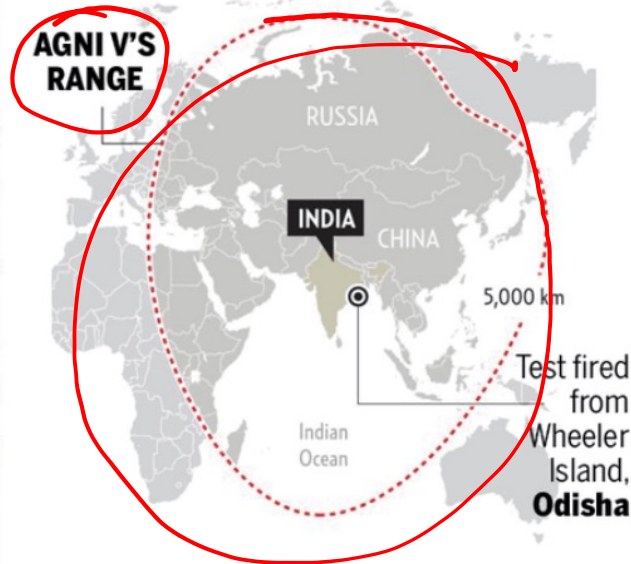
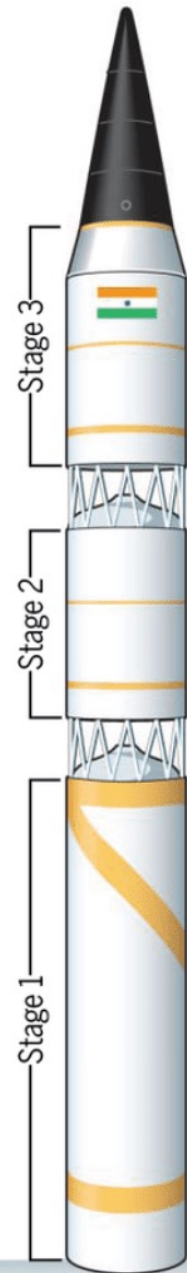
AGNI PRIME MISSILE

- **About:** New generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles.
 - Fully made up of composite material.
 - Smallest and lightest among the entire Agni series of ballistic missiles.
- **Nature:** Canisterised surface-to-surface ballistic missile.
 - Canisterisation lessens time required for launch & improving storage, mobility.
 - A hermetically sealed canister protects the missile from the environment.
- **Range:** 1,000 -2,000 km.
- **Significance:** Further Strengthen deterrence capabilities, manoeuvring & accuracy.
 - High level of accuracy

AGNI SERIES OF LONG RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILES

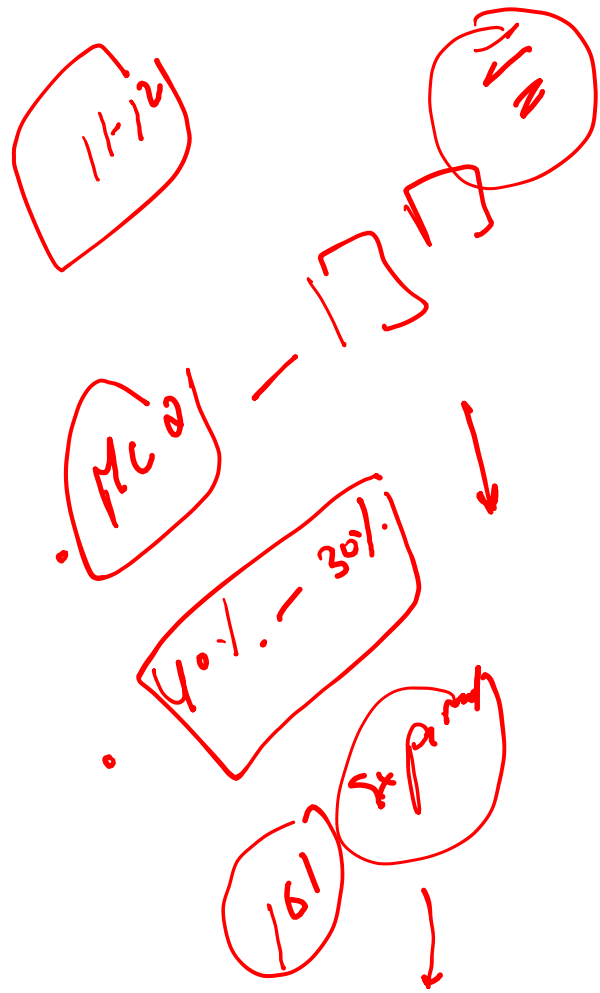
AGNI V

- Operational range: **5,000 km**
- Payload: **1360.78 kg**
- Height **17m**
- Future development possible for variant that could be launched from a submarine



Agni Missile Series	Agni 1	Agni II	Agni III	Agni IV
Range (km)	700	2,500	3,000	4,000
Payload (kg)	1,000	1,000	1,500	1,000
Height (m)	15	20	16.3	20

Source: Reuters, PTI



Class 11 and 12 exams to focus on checking concept clarity: CBSE

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The exams for Classes 11 and 12 from the 2024-25 session will include more competency-based questions that assess the application of concepts in real-life situations, according to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) officials who announced a change in the format.

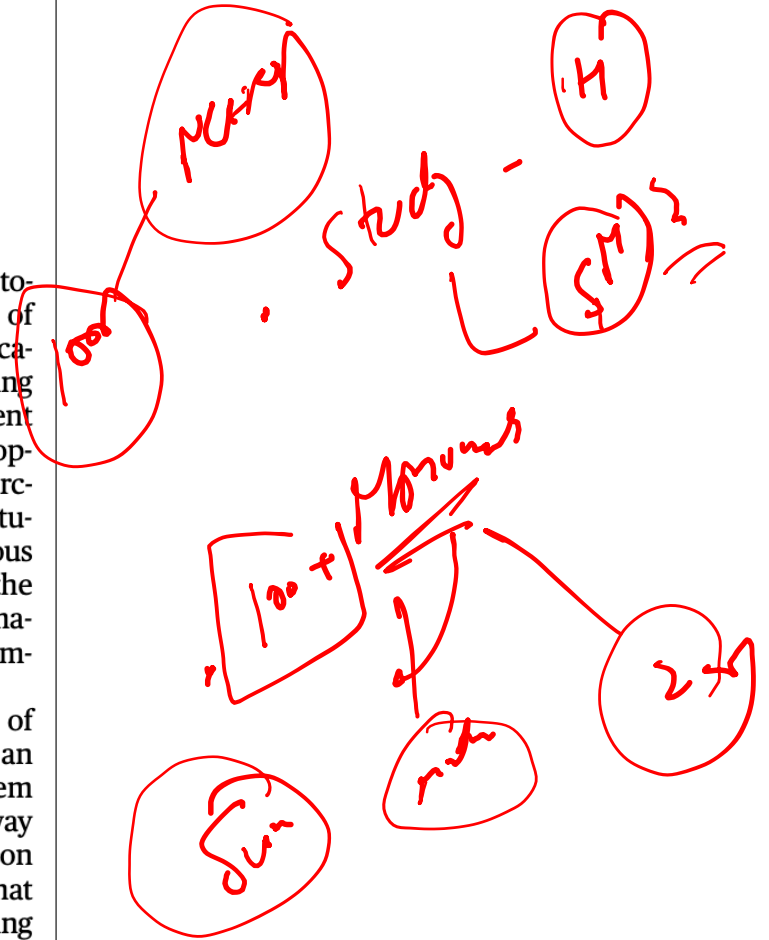
While the percentage of competency-focused questions in the form of multiple-choice questions, case-based questions, source-based integrated questions, or any other type has been increased from 40% to 50%, the percentage of constructed-response questions, including short and long answers, has been reduced from 40% to 30%.

“The board in accordance with National Education Policy (NEP), 2020

has taken multiple steps towards implementation of Competency Based Education in schools, ranging from aligning assessment to competencies, development of exemplar resources for teachers and students as well as continuous capacity building of the teachers,” Joseph Emanuel, Director (Academics), CBSE, said.

“The main emphasis of the board was to create an educational ecosystem that would move away from rote memorisation and towards learning that is focused on developing the creative, critical, and systems thinking capacities of students,” he added.

He said the board is continuing with aligning of the assessments and evaluation practices with NEP-2020 for the academic session 2024-2025. There is no change in the exam format for Classes 9 and 10.



Next & next

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The increase in a vegetarian thali's cost in March: Crisis!

7 in percentage. The cost of a vegetarian thali rose to ₹27.3 per plate from ₹25.5 in the year-ago period, owing to the rise in onion, tomato, and potato prices, according to Crisis Market Intelligence and Analysis. **PH**

Share of independent candidates to lose deposit since 1991

99 in percentage. From 67% of independent candidates forfeiting deposit in 1997, the share went up to 78% by 1962, showing a diminishing trust in independent candidates, according to the ECI. **PH**

The estimated mustard seed output in 2023-24: SEA

12 in million tonnes. Mustard seed production is likely to touch an all-time high in the 2023-24 season in view of a record sown area of 10 million hectares, according to the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA). **PH**

The rides completed by ride-hailing platform Rapido

100 crore. Rapido has crossed 100 crore rides across 120 cities, the app which offers auto, bike, and cab services said. Its an app offering employment opportunities to gig workers. **PH**

The current FIFA ranking of the Indian football men's team

121 The Indian football men's team dropped four places in the latest FIFA rankings, following a defeat in the second round of the 2024 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. **PH**
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On global indices measuring democracy

How do researchers measure democracy? Why is India worried about its ranking on global indices which measure democracy and political participation? What are the strengths and weaknesses of global datasets? Why does India want to make its own democracy index?

EXPLAINER

Saumya Kalia

The story so far:

The V-Dem Institute's recent democracy index termed India as "one of the worst autocratisers". Similar indices have downgraded India's democratic standing in recent years — India is only "partly free" (Freedom House), is home to a "flawed democracy" (The Economist Intelligence Unit) and is better classified as an "electoral autocracy." The Indian Government has however refuted these assessments. It now plans to release its own democracy index, which, according to *Al Jazeera*, will help India "counter recent downgrades in ratings and severe criticisms by international groups".

Why does India care about a democracy index?

From the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project to Freedom House, there is a consensus that India's democracy is in peril. Ahead of the election season, these indices and "negative commentary" by think tanks and agencies threaten India's sovereign ratings and its ranking on the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators. The *Al Jazeera* report noted, India has previously denounced all global rating assessments of Indian conditions, from democracy and press freedom to hunger, human development and happiness. Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar in 2021 called the makers of these indices "self-appointed custodians, who are 'not motive-less'." The grudge with democracy assessments is that the methodology is flawed, sample sizes are inadequate, and that these indices have cultural bias and subjective opinion over objective metrics. India, for instance, ranks between Niger (which is ruled by a military junta) and the Ivory Coast, and is in the same category as Palestine. Any yardstick of democracy — be it fair elections or electoral participation — would suggest



India is "doing as well as any other democracy," Mr. Jaishankar said.

What data do indices use?

There are many approaches to measuring democracy, some using facts, some judgment and some a mix of both. The four broad types of data that these indices use are — observational data (OD) which is data on observable facts, such as voter turnout rates; 'in-house' coding, where researchers assess country-specific information using academic material, newspapers, etc.; expert surveys, where selected experts from a country provide a subjective evaluation; and representative surveys, where a selected group of citizens offer judgments. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has endorsed the use of observational, objective data over judgment-based methodology for

assessments to make them "more broadly acceptable." Others, however, find fact-based metrics "insufficient", and expert intervention necessary, to capture on-ground realities of governance.

Additionally, each index asks and responds to a different question evaluating the health of democracy. While all agree that democracy is a political system in which citizens get to participate in free and fair elections (electoral democracy), indices like V-Dem's, Economist Intelligence Unit and the Bertelsmann Transformation Index assess other dimensions as well: is the democracy 'participatory', are citizen groups and civil society organisations and functional? Are decisions made deliberately, in the best interest of all people, rather than through coercion or minority group interests? Is egalitarian — are economic and social resources

distributed equally? The approach also varies vastly. Some use only two indicators while others have more than 400; the weightage assigned and aggregation model followed also fluctuates across projects. V-Dem's researchers code a series of indicators for 12 areas across media, civil society, political parties, and civil liberties and each area is assigned five experts.

What are the limitations of indices?

The first and the most frequently cited criticism is that there is a degree of subjectivity that tugs at the indices' credibility and precision. Regardless of the scholarly pool and aggregation model used, evaluations are still based on the judgment of researchers and coders, rather than tangible characteristics. V-Dem's "egalitarian" indicator, for instance, assesses the equality of social groups in the political arena — an equivocal question in comparison to say, how many political parties are present in the country. However, a project investigated the degree of expert biases in some indices and found them to be limited. Scholar Paul Staniland, who studied V-Dem's assessment of India since 1947, concurred, telling the *BBC* that "there's not an anti-right-wing bias." Another concern is over the scope of countries included in these indices. Only some survey non-independent and microstates. Smaller countries may thus be overlooked in certain cases. The next criticism is of a perceived ideological discrepancy, partly due to the amorphous definition of democracy itself. India, which suffered a military coup in 2014, is assigned a higher score than India.

Therefore, there is no singular, perfect democracy index, just like there is no singular definition of democracy. Experts, including Mr. Staniland, agree the indices "capture important big-picture dynamics and trends" in democracy. The work, therefore, to benchmark the strengths and weaknesses of regimes, and make different components comparable over time periods and geographies.

THE GIST

The V-Dem Institute's recent democracy index termed India as "one of the worst autocratisers".

While all agree that democracy is a political system in which citizens get to participate in free and fair elections (electoral democracy), indices like V-Dem's, Economist Intelligence Unit and the Bertelsmann Transformation Index assess other dimensions as well: is the democracy 'participatory', are citizen groups and civil society organisations functional? Are decisions made deliberately, in the best interest of all people, rather than through coercion or minority group interests?

A major criticism is that there is a degree of subjectivity that tugs at the indices' credibility and precision.

How are symbols allotted to political parties?

Why was the Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi denied a common symbol by the ECI in Tamil Nadu?

Rangarajan R

The story so far:

The Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) that secured 3.9% and 6.5% votes in Tamil Nadu in 2019 and 2021 respectively, has been allotted a new common symbol (Mikex). The Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) that secured 1.09% and 0.99% votes in 2019 and 2021 has been denied a common symbol (Pot). This has raised questions about the allotment of symbols to "registered unrecognised parties".

What do the rules specify?

A party is recognised as a 'national' or 'state' party under the provisions of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 (Symbols Order) by the Election Commission of India (ECI). The criteria for recognition at the State level consists of (a) winning one Lok Sabha seat for every 25 seats or 3% of Legislative Assembly seats or (b) winning one Lok Sabha or two Assembly seats

along with 6% of votes polled or (c) securing 8% of votes polled in a general election. Symbols are allotted to political parties and contesting candidates as per the provisions of the Symbols Order by ECI. In the largest democracy where a sizeable population is still illiterate, symbols play a crucial role in the voting process. A recognised political party has a reserved symbol that is not allotted to any other candidate in any constituency. For registered but unrecognised political parties, one of the free symbols is allotted as a common symbol during an election if that party contests in two Lok Sabha constituencies or in 5% of seats to the Assembly of a State as the case may be.

What is the current issue?

Rule 10B of the Symbols Order provides that the concession of a common free symbol shall be available to a "registered unrecognised party" for two general elections. Furthermore, a party shall be eligible for a common symbol in any subsequent general election if it had

secured at least 1% of votes polled in the State on the previous occasion when the party availed of this facility. Such an unrecognised party should however apply for a symbol every time in the prescribed format. This application can be made any time during the period commencing six months prior to the expiry of the term of the Lok Sabha or State Assembly as the case may be. The symbols are thereafter allotted on a "first-come-first-served" basis.

In the above cases, the NTK had secured more than 1% of votes in the last two elections with the common symbol of 'Ganana Kisan'. However, since they applied for that symbol only in February 2024, the ECI had allotted that symbol to Bharatiya Praja Aikya Party (BPAF), that had applied earlier, based on the "first-come-first-served" rule. However, the BPAF has not contested elections in Tamil Nadu before. The VCK was denied allotment of a common symbol as it had failed to secure 1% of votes polled in the elections to the State Legislative Assembly

in 2021. The VCK notably has one Lok Sabha MP and four MLAs in Tamil Nadu contesting on the 'Pot' symbol in 2019 and 2021 elections.

What can be the way forward?
The ECI has decided on the applications of NTK and VCK as per existing rules. However, it is counter intuitive from a layman's perspective that the NTK which secured more than 6% of votes polled is not allotted the previous common symbol of its choice. It would be equally baffling for an average voter that the VCK which has elected representatives is ineligible to obtain a common symbol. The two VCK candidates have been eventually allotted a common symbol by the respective returning officers.

The existing threshold for recognition of a party may suffice. The candidates set up by recognised parties enjoy the advantage of being set up on the ballot in the Electronic Voting Machine. Nevertheless, the ECI may consider extending more than 1% of votes in that registered unrecognised parties that secure at least 1% of votes polled in a previous election or have elected representative in the Lok Sabha or State Assembly, shall have the right to be allotted a common symbol of their choice. This would ensure a fair weightage being given for their past electoral performance and strengthen the democratic process.

Rangeethan R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal.

THE GIST

The Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) that secured 1.09% and 0.99% votes in 2019 and 2021 has been denied a common symbol (Pot).

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The current FIFA ranking of the Indian football men's team

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121







The Indian football men's team dropped four places in the latest FIFA rankings, following a defeat in the second round of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Indian men's team drops four places to 121 in FIFA rankings

The Indian men's football team dropped four places to 121 in the latest FIFA rankings, its worst in recent years, following a 1-2 defeat against Afghanistan in the second round of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers in Guwahati last month. The Igor Stimac-coached side had broken into the top-100 last year, having won the Intercontinental Cup, the Tri-Nations tournament and the SAFF Championship. Reigning World champion Argentina continue to top the chart.

 Argentina Top ranked 1st	 Indonesia Biggest climber ↑ 8	 Indonesia Most points scored +30.04	 Comoros New highest rank 117th	 Vietnam Biggest drop ↓ 10	 Vietnam Most points lost -30.04
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RK ↕		Team ↕	Total Points	Previous Points	+/- ↕	More
1	•	 Argentina	1858	1855.2	+2.8	▼
2	•	 France	1840.59	1845.44	-4.85	▼
3	↑ 1	 Belgium	1795.23	1798.46	-3.23	▼
4	↓ 1	 England	1794.9	1800.05	-5.15	▼
5	•	 Brazil	1788.65	1784.09	+4.56	▼
6	↑ 1	 Portugal	1748.11	1745.06	+3.05	▼
7	↓ 1	 Netherlands	1742.29	1745.48	-3.19	▼

LONDON Senior British jurists call on govt. to stop weapons sales to Israel



Over 600 British jurists, including three retired judges from the U.K. Supreme Court, are calling upon the government to suspend arms sales to Israel, citing pressure from Prime Minister Rishi Sunak...

WARSAW Diplomatic crisis between Poland and Israel after aid worker's death



A new diplomatic crisis between Poland and Israel has erupted following the death of a Polish aid worker in Gaza, with the Polish President on Thursday denouncing a comment by the Israeli Ambassador as "outrageous"...

GUANGZHOU U.S. Treasury Secretary in China to press officials on industrial subsidy



U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen arrived in China's Guangzhou on Thursday for meetings to press Beijing over fears the country's industrial subsidies for green energy, cars and batteries could flood global markets with cheap goods...

JOHANNESBURG South Africa's ex-Parliament Speaker charged in graft probe



South Africa's former Parliament Speaker Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula was charged with corruption and money laundering on Thursday, in the latest scandal to hit the governing party ahead of elections in May...

Drones hit targets in Myanmar capital, claims resistance group

Myanmar's main pro-democracy resistance group says its armed wing launched drone attacks on the airport and a military headquarters in the capital, Naypyitaw, but the country's ruling military said it destroyed the drones as they attacked.

Associated Press BANGKOK

Myanmar's main pro-democracy resistance group said on Thursday its armed wing launched drone attacks on the airport and a military headquarters in the capital, Naypyitaw, but the country's ruling military said it destroyed the drones as they attacked.



The airport compound, which includes both a military air base and a civilian airport, NUG claims to have attacked.

resistance groups with a good deal of independence. Although there was no immediate evidence of any damage caused by the attack, the group's acknowledgement that it had taken place in one of the most heavily guarded locations in the country will be

of casualties. BBC's Burmese-language service and Khit Thi, an online news service sympathetic to the resistance, said the airport was shut down for a while after the attacks.

People who live near the airport said they were unaware of any attack, and photos released by the government showed only what appeared to be crashed drones.

which is frequently employed by People's Defence Force units, which lack the Army's heavy firepower. For the resistance forces, drones have become crucial weapons for fighting back.

U.S. support depends on protecting civilians: Biden

Agence France-Presse WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday that continued support of the United States would depend on Israeli actions to protect Gaza civilians, for the first time suggesting conditions on aid as he urged an "immediate ceasefire".



Joe Biden

In a phone call after the Israeli killing of seven aid workers which Israel says was a mistake - Mr. Biden urged Mr. Netanyahu to "announce and implement a series of specific, concrete and measurable steps to address civilian harm, humanitarian suffering and the safety of aid workers," a White House statement said.

tiators to conclude a deal without delay to bring the hostages home," the statement said. Qatar has been leading prolonged talks on a temporary ceasefire that would include the freeing of hostages seized when Hamas carried out the deadliest attack in Israeli history on October 7.

Macron flays 'bizarre' remarks from Russia

Agence France-Presse SAINT-DENIS

President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday denounced as "bizarre and threatening" Russia's tone following rare phone talks between the Defence Ministers of France and Russia, their first contact since 2020.

Any suggestions France might have been involved in the deadly attack were 'ridiculous', he said

Russia for its part warned France during the talks it hoped that the French Secret Services had not been involved in a recent attack on a concert hall in Moscow, according to a readout from the Russian Defence Ministry.

Deadly watch



Ground situation: Sudanese security forces patrol in a commercial district in Gedaref city in eastern Sudan on Wednesday. Sudan's war has claimed thousands of lives and displaced more than 8.5 million people, according to the UN.

seen by many as the latest indication that it is losing the initiative to its determined opponents.

A similar attack in December had triggered tit-for-tat air strikes with Pakistan

He warned that the death toll could rise as some of the security forces injured in the attacks were "not in a favourable condition".

Philippines to hold joint naval drills with U.S., Japan, Australia to counter China

Agence France-Presse MANILA

The Philippines will hold joint naval drills with the United States, Japan and Australia, two diplomatic sources said on Thursday, as the four countries deepen military ties to counter China's expanding influence in the Asia-Pacific region.



Philippine and Australian soldiers march during the military exercise Wasp held at a naval base south of Manila in 2023.

The exercise will be held on April 7 in the disputed South China Sea - which Beijing claims almost entirely - days before U.S. President Joe Biden is due to hold the first trilateral summit with the leaders of the Philippines and Japan.

Israeli strike killed 106 in 'apparent war crime'

Associated Press JERUSALEM

A Human Rights Watch investigation published on Thursday said an Israeli attack on a Gaza building in October had no apparent militant target, but killed 106 civilians, including 54 children, making it an "apparent war crime".

350 people, around a third of whom had fled their homes elsewhere in the territory. Doctors killed included children playing soccer outside and residents charging phones in the first-floor grocery store, it said.

10 Iranian security personnel killed in jihadist attacks near Pakistan border

Agence France-Presse TEHRAN

Jihadist attacks in southeastern Iran near Pakistan killed 10 Iranian security personnel, state media reported on Thursday, doubling an earlier toll.

extremists. "The case of the terrorist attacks was closed with the martyrdom of 10 members of the security forces," and the killing of 18 "terrorists", state television said.

Foreign attackers He added that the assailants appeared to be foreigners, without providing further details.

The group claimed another police station in Sistan-Baluchistan's city of Kaak. The number of assailants killed in the clashes also rose from the 15 who

eschaled in the past year as China has become increasingly confident in asserting its claims over waters also claimed by the Philippines and Japan, as well as over self-ruled Taiwan.

Mr. Biden's planned April 11 summit with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the White House will be the latest in a series of meetings with Asia-Pacific partners.

Philippines to hold joint naval drills with U.S., Japan, Australia to counter China

Agence France-Presse

MANILA

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The diplomatic sources



Philippine and Australian soldiers march during the military exercise Alon, held at a naval base north of Manila in 2023. AFP

spoke on condition of anonymity because the drills have not yet been officially announced.

Earlier this week, the Australian warship *HMAS Warramunga* arrived at the Philippine island province

of Palawan, which faces the hotly contested waters.

The Philippine military said the visit was “aimed at strengthening military relations with partner nations”.

Regional tensions have

escalated in the past year as China has become increasingly confident in asserting its claims over waters also claimed by the Philippines and Japan, as well as over self-ruled Taiwan.

In response, the United States has sought to strengthen its alliances in the region, including with treaty allies Japan and the Philippines.

Mr. Biden's planned April 11 summit with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the White House will be the latest in a series of meetings with Asia-Pacific partners.

Silence on OPS, promise to end PMLA: Cong manifesto will be out today

MANOJ C G
NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

AFTER MAKING the Old Pension Scheme a strong poll pitch ahead of Assembly polls and actually reverting to it in states where it came to power, the Congress party is learnt to have junked the promise of an OPS for government employees in its manifesto for the Lok Sabha elections.

The manifesto, to be released by the party on Friday, will also likely promise scrapping of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, whose ambit was widened by the Congress-led UPA government and later strengthened by the Narendra Modi-led government through amendments in 2015 and 2019. These amendments had given teeth to the Directorate of Enforcement.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



DECEMBER 2023 INCIDENT IN J&K

Army probes point to torture, death of 3 men from Poonch during questioning

Officers among personnel to face action; Army says it's committed to highest standards

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE ARMY'S internal inquiries into the killing of three civilians, allegedly during interrogation by Army personnel following a terror attack in J&K's Poonch in December 2023 that left four soldiers dead, and into the operational gaps have found serious lapses in the conduct of 7-8 personnel, including officers, at various levels.



Rajnath Singh met families of victims last December. ANI file

Sources have told *The Indian Express* that the findings of the inquiries indicate that the three civilians died of torture, allegedly during interrogation.

The terror attack took place on December 21 on the Mughal Road between Dehra Ki Gali and

Buffiaz. The next morning, eight civilians were picked up from Topa Pir in Poonch district's Buffiaz area, and five from Rajouri district's Thanamandi area. Of the eight taken away from Topa Pir, three died of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

10 survived ordeal, most still to recover even after 3 months, unable to work

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, APRIL 4

MORE THAN three months after they were picked up and tortured, allegedly by Army personnel, following the killing of four soldiers in a terror attack in Jammu's Poonch district, nine of the 10 villagers who survived are yet to return to work, many still nursing their wounds.

Of the 13 Poonch residents who were rounded up after the December 21 terror attack, three

were allegedly tortured to death, while five each were admitted to two separate hospitals.

Of them, the only one who has returned to work, as a room attendant at a Srinagar hotel, is 30-year-old Topa Pir resident Mohammad Riyaz.

"Much before I was picked up by Army personnel on the morning of December 22, I had taken an advance from my employer before returning home," he told *The Indian Express*, explaining why he rushed back to work

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar at a public meeting in Jamui, Thursday. PTI

PM slams Cong on national security: Now India 'ghar mein ghus ke maarta hai'

SANTOSH SINGH
JAMUI (BIHAR), APRIL 4

OFFICIALLY KICKING off the BJP poll campaign in Bihar on Thursday, with his first election meeting in the state since the announcement of the poll schedule, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attacked the Opposition over corruption and issues of national security.

Sharing the dais with him,

Bihar Chief Minister and JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar reached out to Muslims, assuring them that there would be "no communal discord" under the NDA government in the state.

Jamui votes in the first phase on April 19, along with Naxosada, Gaya and Aurangabad in Bihar.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

KHARGE ATTACKS PM ON CHINA PAGE 7

REVISION AFTER SC VERDICT, ITS 'WELCOMING RECEPTION': NCERT

3 Babri references out, Ayodhya section 'revised' in Class XII new politics book

RIKITA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE section on the Ayodhya dispute in a chapter in NCERT's Class XII political science textbook is said to have been revised to give primacy to the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, factor in the 2019 Supreme Court verdict allowing the temple — and, in at least three places, references to the December 6, 1992 demolition of the Babri Masjid

Fourth round of revision
THIS IS the fourth round of revision and updating of NCERT textbooks since 2014. The first round, in 2017, was called a "review", and not a revision, as the then NCERT director cited the need to update textbooks to reflect recent events, changes.

have been deleted. *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The revised book is expected to be in classrooms in a month. These changes are part of the revision of school textbooks undertaken by NCERT for the academic year 2024-25, which were recently communicated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

NCERT, which advises the Union government on school education, is the apex body tasked

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE



NEW UNIVERSE MAP MAY OPEN WINDOW TO DARK ENERGY

PROSTATE CANCER RISES IN INDIA TO DOUBLE BY 2040: LANCET STUDY

DUTY TO HUSBAND: AJIT PAWAR'S WIFE ON FIGHTING POLLS PAGES 8, 5

RESPONSE TO EXPRESS REPORT

ED driven by legal mandate, evidence, not shifting sands of politics: Official

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 4

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate is "driven by legal mandates and evidence, not by the shifting sands of political will" and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) "stands as the bedrock upon which credible investigations are built", a senior Government official said Thursday. The official was responding

to the report "Since 2014, 25 Opposition leaders facing corruption probe crossed over to BJP, 23 of them got reprieve", published in *The Indian Express* Wednesday.

"The Government's unwavering stance on rooting out corruption has instilled renewed confidence among citizens, reinforcing the belief that India is shedding its image as a sanctuary for the corrupt," the official said. The official accused the Opposition of "spreading a spu-

rious narrative that questions the credibility of agencies" and "engaging in a campaign to malign the integrity of our nation's investigative agencies", after its "corrupt leaders" were "subjected to the rigours of the law".

"The legal processes in India are far from linear or simplistic. They are characterised by a network of checks, balances, appeals and reviews that ensure no case is closed without exhaustive examination. This framework,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

'Mitron, Bhrashtachariyon Ke Khilaf Action Lunga' Ek-Ek Ko Jumla Party Mein Bhar Lunga



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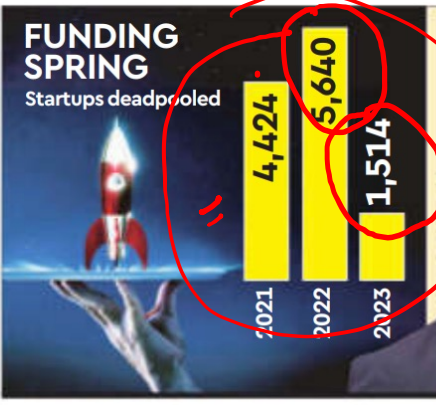
Startups come of age as 'dead pool' slumps 75%

RAJESH KURUP
Mumbai, April 4

INDIA'S UNICORN STORY may have slowed down and a large number of startups may be freezing in the funding winter, but there is a good story unfolding as well — that of an improving survival rate. The number of startups that have shut shop fell by a whopping 73% in 2023 compared to 5,640 in the previous year.

According to data provided by Tracxn, only 1,514 startups have ended up in the 'dead pool' — euphemism for shutting down in the startup world — in 2023 and one startup went belly-up so far this year. In 2021, the number was 4,424.

Some of the companies that



ended in the dead pool in the past years include Zipgo, Niki, GramFactory, Crejo.Fun, FoodyBuddyCherryTin, FrontRow and Crater.Club, among others.

SHASHANK RANDEV, FOUNDER, 100XVC



THERE IS A HIGH LEVEL OF MATURITY. THE INCREASE IN ACCESS TO CAPITAL HAS REDUCED THE RISK OF FAILURES

Market experts believe that these are signs that the industry is maturing and access to capital continues.

"The decline in startups closing shop is a testimony of a strong eco-

ABHIMANYU BISHT, OPERATING PARTNER, SPYRE



BUILDING A COMPANY THROUGH 2022-23 WAS 'COMING-OF-AGE'. THOSE WHO SURVIVED HAVE ONLY GOT STRONGER

system. There is an increase in access to capital, reducing risk of failures. Most importantly, founders are now able to avoid mistakes, which were being made 10 years ago, and build

ANISHA PATNAIK, FOUNDER, LEXSTART PARTNERS



THERE'S NOW A WEALTH OF PRECEDENTS, DATA AND GUIDANCE AVAILABLE TO ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

robust business models," Shashank Randev, founder/venture capitalist of early-stage venture capital firm 100XVC, told FE.

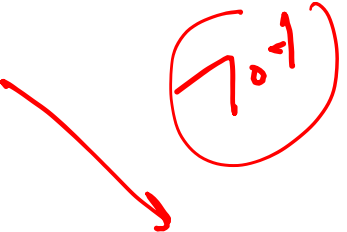
According to Abhimanyu Bisht,

operating partner of proptech venture fund Spyre, building a company through 2022-23 was 'coming of age' for entrepreneurs. Those who survived have only got stronger with better unit economics and robust business models.

"The next two years will see startups being built by new ideology of founders, who have an established and long-term vision for their business with profitability hard-coded within," he added.

There was a 33% drop in funding for Indian startups in 2022 compared with 2021, a report by PwC said. In 2023, funding further declined across all stages by 73%.

Continued on Page 5



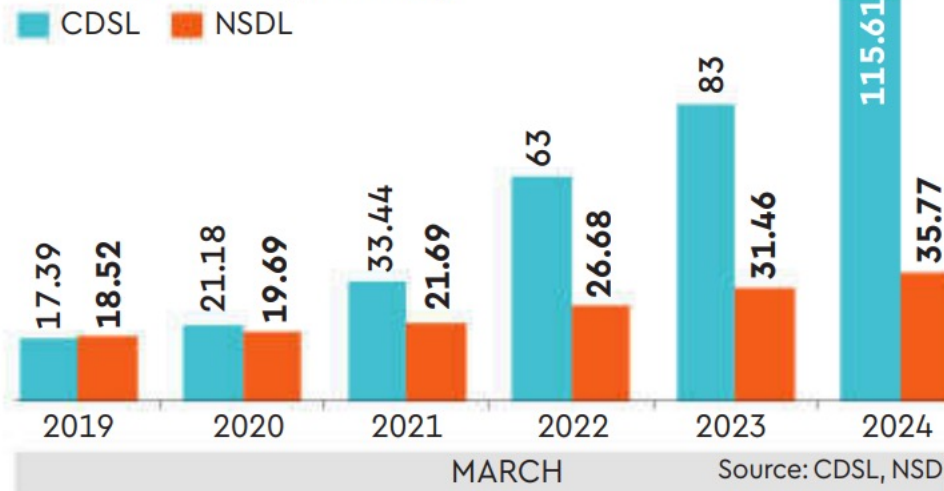
36.91 million new demat accounts opened in FY24

150

IN FY2024, a record-breaking 36.91 million new demat accounts were added, bringing the total number of demat accounts to 151.38 million as of March 31, 2024. Specifically, CDSL accounted for the addition of 32.6 million new accounts, resulting in a total of 115.61 million demat accounts. NSDL, on the other hand, contributed 4.31 million new accounts, bringing their total to 35.77 million.



Demat accounts (in million)



Compiled by
Kishor Kadam

Prostate cancer cases in India to double by 2040: Lancet

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS

Pune, April 4

TWO YEARS AGO, a 64-year-old general surgeon in Pune complained of backache and was diagnosed with an advanced stage of prostate cancer that had already spread to his spine. Yet he had no early symptoms like difficulty in passing urine. Many Indian men, like him, are being diagnosed in late stages and succumbing to the disease, says a latest Lancet Commission paper, which has projected prostate cancer incidence in India to surge sharply by 2040.

According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer projections, which Lancet has factored in its analysis, prostate cancer incidence in India will double to about 71,000 new cases per year by 2040. Prostate cancer accounts for three per cent of all cancers in India, with an estimated 33,000-42,000 new cases diagnosed annually.

"A large proportion of patients in India are diagnosed in advanced

SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Difficult or disturbed urine flow
- Frequent urination, especially at night
- Inability to empty the bladder completely
- Pain or burning during urination
- Change in bowel habits
- Swelling or fluid build-up in the legs or feet
- Blood in the urine or semen
- Pain in the back, hips or pelvis
- Painful ejaculation
- Unexplained weight loss



stages which means that the cancer has spread at the time of diagnosis. As a result, about 65 per cent (18,000-20,000) patients die of their disease," says Dr Vedang Murthy, Professor, Department of Radiation Oncology and Convenor, Uro-Oncology Disease Management Group at Tata Memorial Centre, who is among the authors of the Lancet Commission on Prostate Cancer.

As per the Lancet Commission report, cases of prostate cancer are projected to double from 1.4 mil-

lion per year in 2020 to 2.9 million per year by 2040 worldwide, with low and middle-income countries predicted to see the highest increase. The findings will be presented at the European Association of Urology Congress on April 6. Globally, prostate cancer accounted for around 3,75,000 deaths worldwide in 2020, making it the fifth leading cause of cancer death among men.

This surge can be prevented, according to Dr Murthy, provided all men over 60 get tested early

with the same rigour that women are advised for breast screenings after 40. This will pick up the cancer at a treatable stage than men who consult a doctor when it's too late. "Early detection and education programmes will help save lives," writes Professor Nick James, lead author of the Commission, Professor of Prostate and Bladder Cancer Research at the Institute of Cancer Research, London.

Why are cancer cases rising in India?

Ageing populations and increasing life expectancy mean there will be higher numbers of older men in the coming years. "Also rampant corporate health checkups that include a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test, which measures protein produced by both cancerous and benign tissue in the prostate glands, is pushing up numbers," Dr Murthy says. The main risk factors are age and genetics, which, according to him, are aggravated by additional factors like smoking, obesity, a poor diet and lifestyle.



Why early awareness and detection are important


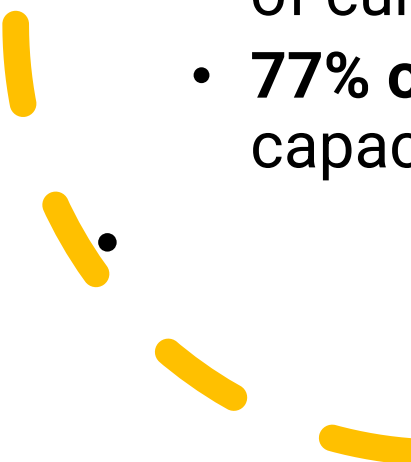

Prostate cancer may cause no signs or symptoms in the early stages and it is only in the advanced stages that patients report symptoms like trouble urinating, bone pain, blood in the semen or urine and others. "You may manage your lifestyle but early screening in Indian men, especially those above 60 years, is required. While general screening of the population is not recommended, older men with symptoms or prostate enlargement like frequent and night-time urination, weak urine stream and pain or blood in the urine should seek medical attention and have a PSA blood test done. This simple and inexpensive blood test is widely and easily available even in smaller towns," says Dr Murthy.



The UK has tried affordable pop-up clinics and mobile testing with Man Vans, which provide free health checks — including PSA tests — to high-risk men in London aged 45 and over.



Solar Waste Management

- 
- Recently, a report titled 'Enabling a Circular Economy in India's Solar Industry – Assessing the Solar Waste Quantum' shed light on India's escalating solar waste crisis.
 - The study was conducted by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) in collaboration with experts from the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (a leading not-for-profit policy research institution in Asia)
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- What are the Key Highlights of the Report?
 - **Solar Waste Projection:** The current solar capacity of India, as of FY23, has generated about **100 kilotonnes** (kt) of cumulative waste, which will increase to 340 kt by 2030.
 - This volume will increase 32 times by 2050 resulting in about 19000 kt of cumulative waste.
 - **77% of the cumulative waste generated by 2050** will be due to new capacities.
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- **State-wise Contribution:** Around 67% of the projected waste by 2030 is expected to be produced by five states: **Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh.**
 - Rajasthan will account for 24% of the waste generated by 2030, followed by Gujarat accounting for 16%, and Karnataka accounting for 12%.
- 

Critical Minerals Content:

Discarded solar modules contain critical minerals essential for India's economic development and national security, including silicon, copper, tellurium, and cadmium.

The projected 340 kt of waste by 2030 is estimated to comprise 10 kt of silicon, 12-18 tonnes of silver, and 16 tonnes of cadmium and tellurium.

- **Recommendations:**

- The MNRE should maintain and periodically update a database of the installed solar capacity (containing details such as module technology, manufacturer, commissioning date, etc.) for accurate mapping of plausible waste generation centres.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should issue guidelines for **collecting and storing solar waste**.
 - Furthermore, it should **promote the safe and efficient processing of stored waste**.

What is Solar Waste?

About: Solar waste is any waste generated during the manufacturing of solar modules, or discarded modules and scrap from manufacturing processes.

- Modules are discarded at the end of their functional life or due to damages from transportation, handling, and installation.
- Improper handling and landfilling of solar waste should be avoided. Proper treatment is necessary to **reclaim valuable minerals and prevent** the leaching of toxic materials like lead and cadmium.

- What are Electronic Waste Management Rules 2022?
- **About:** The management of E-Waste in India is presently regulated under E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022 under the Environment Protection Act, 1986
 - It includes waste management of solar PV modules, panels, and cells.
- **Applicability:** These rules apply to everyone involved in the life cycle of e-waste, including manufacturers, producers, refurbishers, dismantlers, and recyclers.

$$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{d^2}$$

UP Board of Madarsa Education Act,
2004

$$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$$

$$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$$

The Allahabad High Court (HC) has struck down the **Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004**, as unconstitutional.

What is the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004?

Overview of the Act:

- The Act aimed to regulate and govern the functioning of **madrasas (Islamic educational institutions)** in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

It provided a framework for the establishment, recognition, curriculum, and administration of madrasas across Uttar Pradesh.



Under this Act, the **Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education** was established to oversee and supervise the activities of madrasas in the state.

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(6-14)

Constitutional Violation:

The act has been deemed unconstitutional by the Allahabad HC, as it promotes education segregated along religious lines, contradicting the principle of secularism enshrined in the Indian Constitution and fundamental rights.

The Act's provisions were criticised for failing to ensure quality compulsory education up to the age of 14 years, as mandated by Article 21 A of the Constitution.

Concerns were raised regarding the exclusion of madrasas from the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 potentially depriving students of universal and quality school education.

Limited Curriculum:

Upon examination of madrasa syllabi, the court noted a curriculum heavily focused on Islamic studies, with limited emphasis on modern subjects.

Students were required to study Islam and its doctrines to progress, with modern subjects often included as optional or offered minimally.

Conflict with Higher Education Standards:

The Act was deemed to conflict with Section 22 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956, raising questions about its compatibility with higher education standards.

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What are the Constitutional Provisions Regarding Education in India?

Provisions	Article
The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years	Article 45
The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002 , provided the Right to Education as a fundamental right in Part III of the Constitution and made education a fundamental right for children between the ages of six and fourteen.	Article 21A
Promotion of education and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other weaker sections of the people.	Article 46
Freedom to attend religious education in certain educational institutions established under an endowment or trust and administered by the state.	Article 28
Education of minorities, protection of interests of minorities	Article 29
Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions	Article 30
Parents and guardians must provide educational opportunities for their children between the ages of 6 and 14.	Article 51A(k)

Budget (2024-25) for Education

Department of School Education & Literacy: It has been allocated ₹73,498 crore for FY 2024-25.

- This is the **highest ever allocation** for the department.
- There has been an overall increase of ₹12,024 crore (19.56%) in the FY 2024-25 from the Revised Estimates (RE) of 2023-24.

Department of Higher Education: It has been allocated ₹47,619.77 crore for FY 2024-25.

- The scheme allocation is ₹7,487.87 crore and the non-scheme allocation is ₹40,131.90 crore.
- There has been an overall increase of ₹3,525.15 crore (7.99%) in the FY 2024-25 with respect to FY 2023-24.



India's First Commercial Crude Oil Storage

India aims to construct its first commercial crude oil strategic storage to bolster reserves as a precaution against potential supply interruptions.

Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL) has invited bids for building 2.5 million tonnes of underground storage at Padur in Karnataka.

■ Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) Programme:

Phase	Location	Status
Phase I	Visakhapatnam	Filled (Strategic in nature)
Phase I	Mangaluru	Filled (Strategic in nature)
Phase I	Padur	Filled (Strategic in nature)
Phase II	Chandikhol	Approved (PPP basis)
Phase II	Padur	Approved (PPP basis)

- Crude oil storages on India's East and West coasts are constructed in underground rock caverns, known as the safest means for storing hydrocarbons.
- Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL):
- ISPRL, a subsidiary of the Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, manages Strategic Crude Oil Storage facilities, with Engineers India Limited (EIL) as the Project Management Consultant, overseeing storage operations and coordinating stock release during supply disruptions through a Government Empowered Committee.

Strategic Petroleum Reserves

SPR-I

GoI has set up 5.33 MMT of strategic crude oil storages in SPR Phase-I at following 3 locations:

Vishakhapatnam, AP

Mangalore, Karnataka

Padur, Karnataka

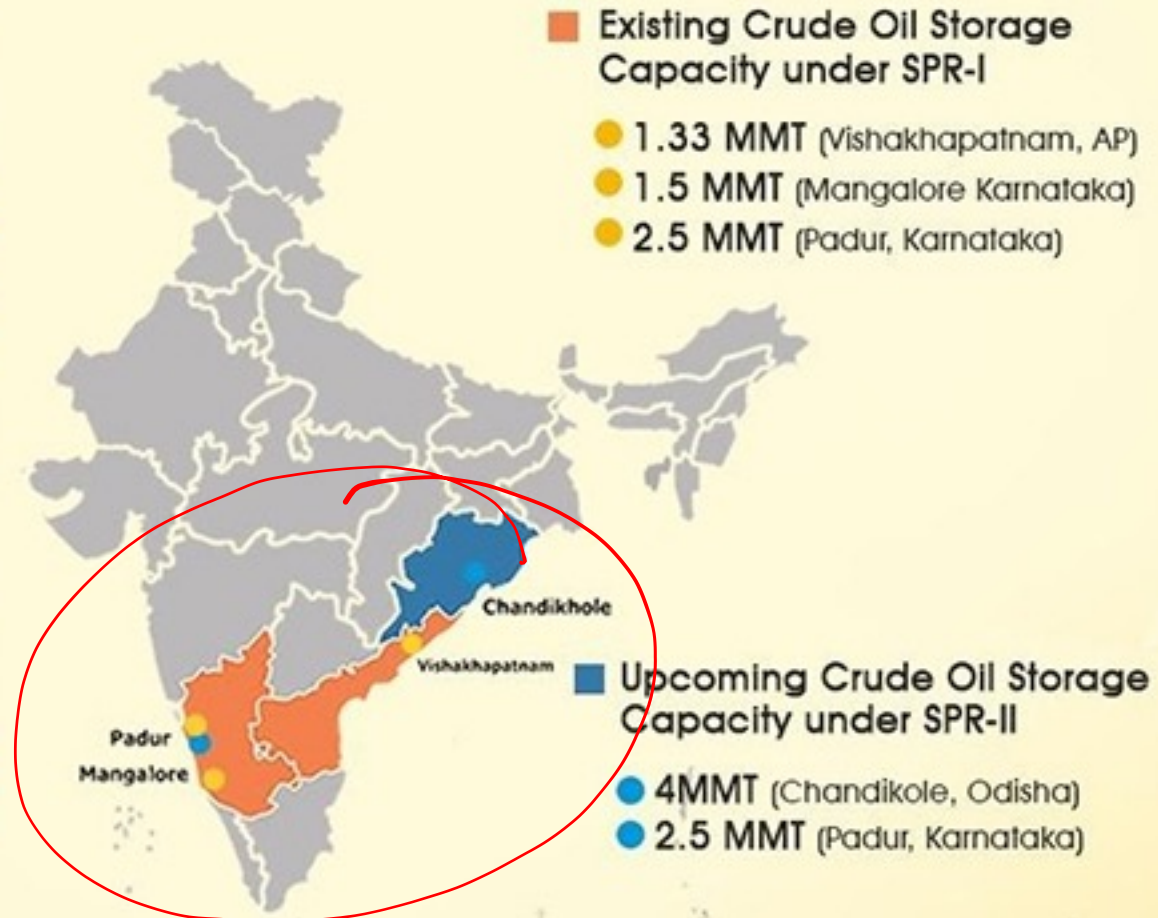
SPR-I has been commissioned and dedicated to the Nation in Feb' 2019

SPR-II

Another 6.5 MMT of strategic crude reserves is being planned in SPR-II at:


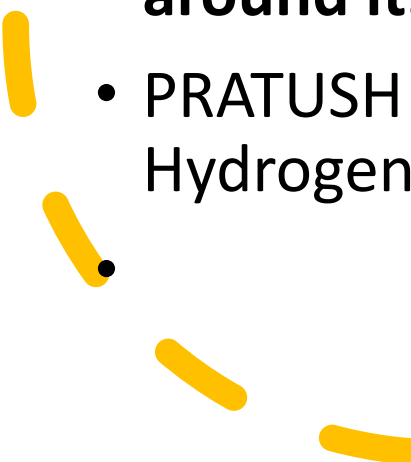
Chandikhole, Odisha


Padur, Karnataka





PRATUSH Telescope

- 
- **India's Pratyush Telescope** is among the telescopes that astronomers are **considering to put around the moon**.
 - **About**
 - Astronomers are looking forward to opening a new window on the universe by **posting high-resolution telescopes on the moon, and in orbit around it**.
 - PRATUSH (Probing ReionizATIion of the Universe using Signal from Hydrogen) is a **radio telescope**, to be sited on the moon's far side.
- 

- 
- PRATUSH is being built by the **Raman Research Institute (RRI)** in Bengaluru with collaboration from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
 - Initially, ISRO will place PRATUSH into orbit around the earth. After some fine-tuning, the space agency will launch it moonwards.



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Purana Qila



The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has planned to further excavate the Purana Qila site near the Kunti temple.

About - It is one of the *oldest forts in Delhi* located on the banks of *Yamuna river*.

The fort is popularly known as *Indraprastha or Pandavon ka Qila or Old fort*.

Literacy evidence- The fort was mentioned by the Greek traveler Megasthenes in the 4th century BCE as one of the seven cities of Delhi.

- **Built by** - The present citadel at Purana Qila was believed to have been built by the 2nd Mughal Emperor Humayun and was completed by Afghan Sher Shah Suri.
- The fort was the inner citadel of the **city of Din Panah** during Humayun's rule.
- The Qila was inspired by **Jama Masjid**, which was established 15 years before the reconstruction of Qila.
- **Architecture** - Purana Quila is roughly rectangular in shape having a circuit of walls built using **red sandstone**.

Bada Darwaza (Large Gate)

- It is tucked between two massive, curving bastions made of rubble masonry.

Forbidden gateway darwaza / North (Talaqui


- It typically combines Islamic pointed arch with Hindu Chhatris and brackets.

Southern gateway (Purana Quila, Humayun Darwaza)

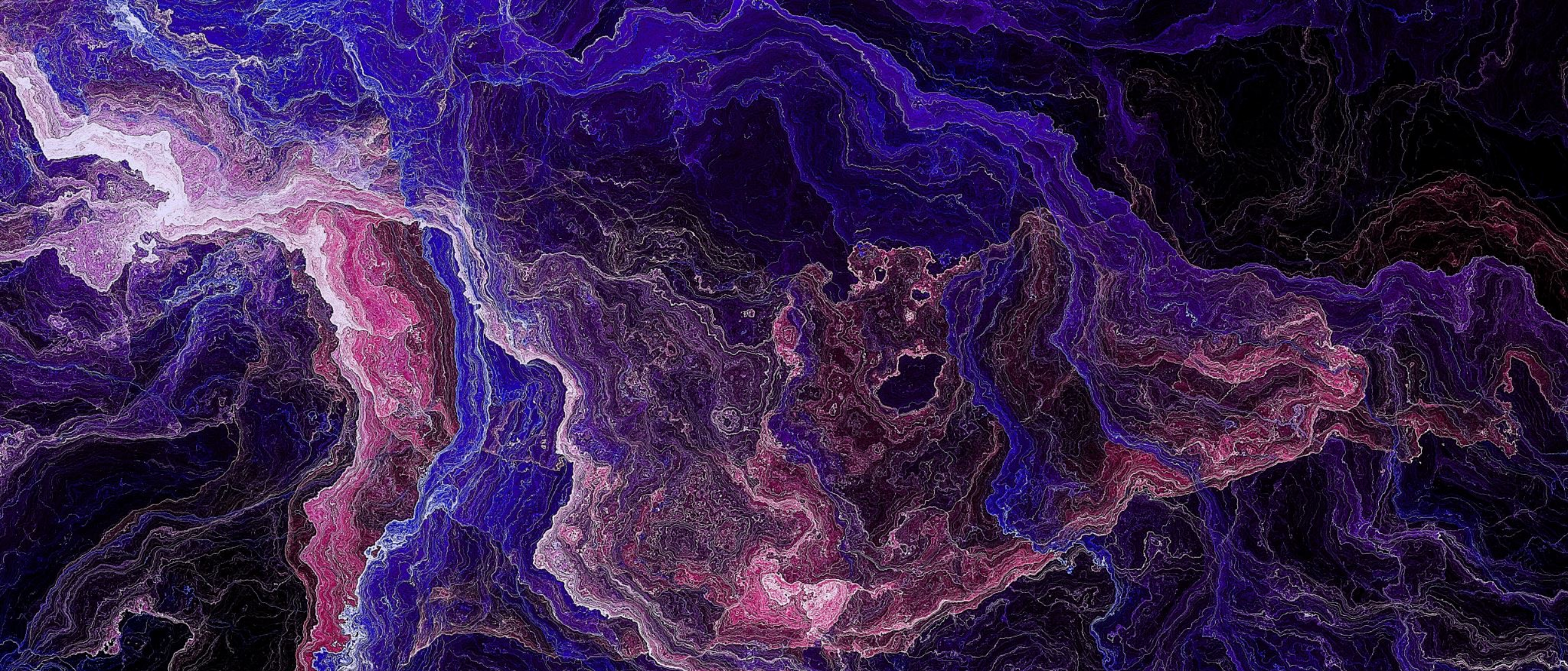
- It had a similar plan like northern gateway.



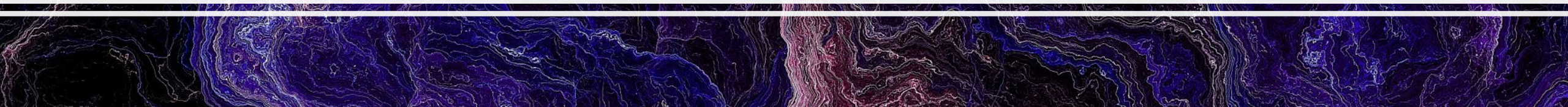
• **Excavation Findings**

- **Kushan period** – Gold foil, ivory sealing, copper coins, a tortoise amulet .
 - **Gupta period** – Copper wheel, Gajalakshmi plaque,
 - **Sultanate period** – Ivory locket.
 - **Sunga and Kushan period** – House structures with brick walls and clay floors.
 - **Rajput period** – Guard cell and a post hole.
- 

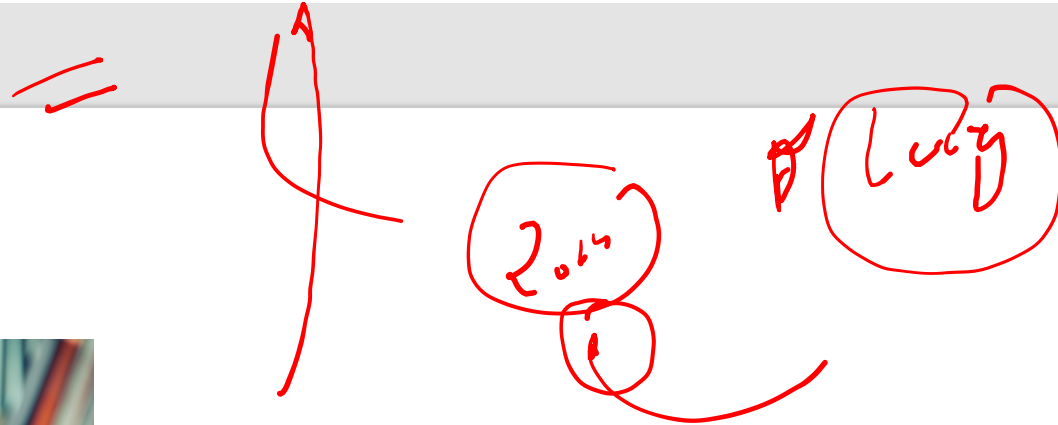




Fun fact



We only use 10 percent of our brains.



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Lightning Web Components



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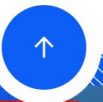



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Thank you
guys.

