

Daily Current Affairs



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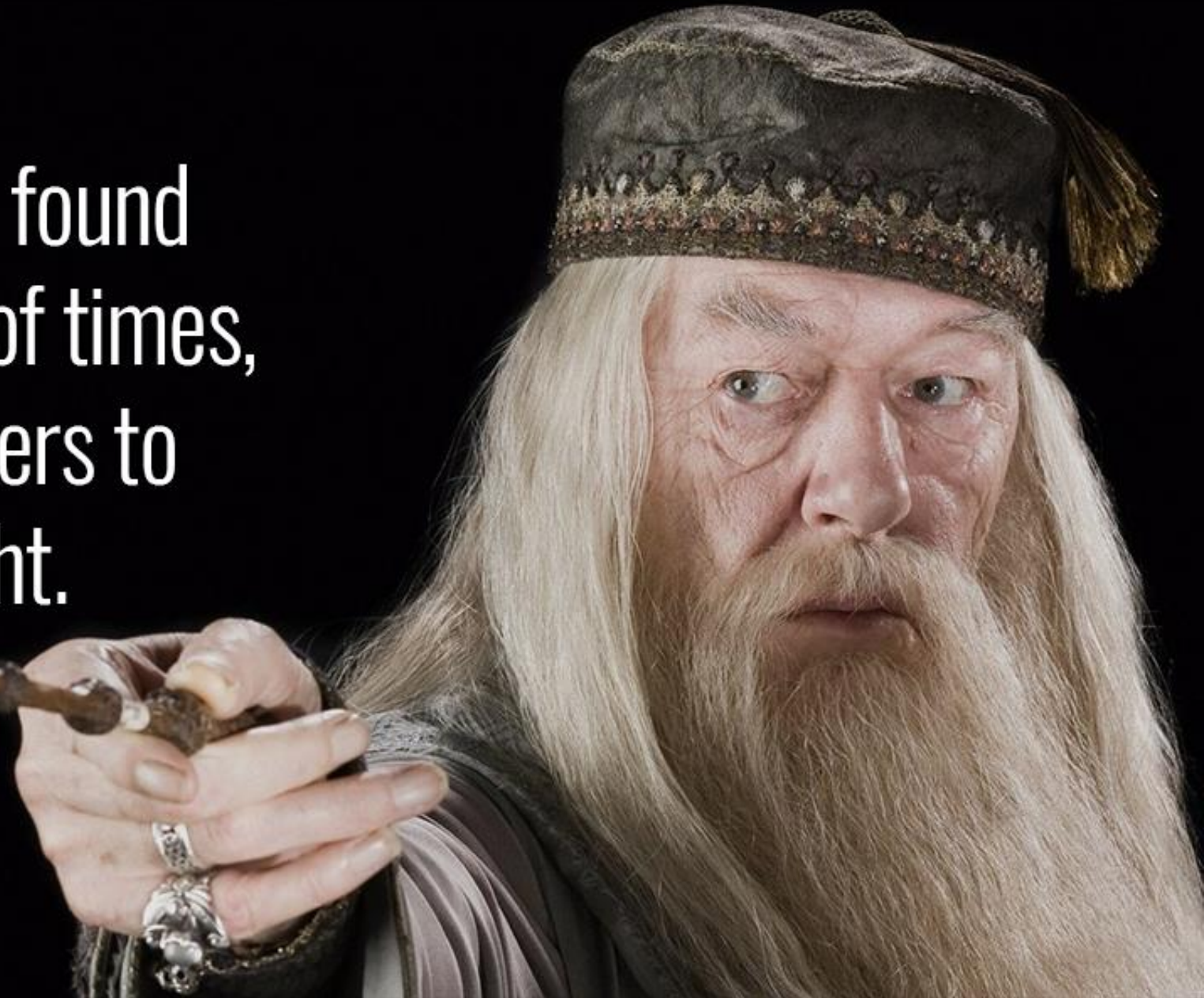
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test related to
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Happiness can be found
even in the **darkest** of times,
if one only remembers to
turn on the light.

- *Dumbledore*




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PRESERVING LANDMARKS

What India's Jewish buildings have to say

The story of restoration of their architecture that advocates a community-led way of life



MAGAZINE PAGE 1

Why are Katchatheevu pacts being questioned?

FAQ PAGE 8

The charity that Israel bombed in Gaza

PROFILES PAGE 9

Butler ton tops Kohli's century as RR wins

SPORT PAGE 13

NEARBY

Leh Apex Body calls off March

SRINAGAR
Leh Apex Body called off the border march on Sunday, as the Ladakh administration stepped up measures to block the proposed event. » PAGE 5

Israeli troops dig up hostage's body

JERUSALEM
Israel said on Saturday that its special forces had recovered the body of a hostage killed while being held captive by the Hamas in Gaza. » PAGE 12

CAA Rules allow dual citizenship: pleas in SC

Rules overlook the prerequisite of 'effective renunciation of citizenship', petitioners say | Dual citizenship violative of Citizenship Act, 1955 and Article 9 of Constitution, petitioners argue | 'Presumption of religious persecution' inherent in the Act, submissions filed ahead of hearing say

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Rules of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act do not require foreign applicants to effectively renounce the citizenship of their native country, creating a possibility for dual citizenship which is directly violative of the Citizenship Act, petitioners have argued in the Supreme Court.

Written submissions filed by the petitioners ahead of the April 9 hearing of their plea to stay the CAA Rules said that Section 9 of the Citizenship Act of 1955 and Article 9 of the Constitution both clearly and explicitly prohibit the acquisition of dual citizenship.

"Rife with defects", the petitioners, led by the Indian Union Muslim League, represented by senior advocate Kapil Sibal and advocate Haris Bheem, said that the 2024 Rules are rife with defects, and have even overlooked the fact that "effective renunciation of citizenship was an important prerequisite for granting citizenship in cases where the nationality of another country is clearly attributable to the applicant".

"Allowing dual citizenship, one of them being in-

Fundamental question

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the pleas against the CAA and related rules on April 9.

- Petitioners say rules overlook the fact that effective renunciation of citizenship is a prerequisite for citizenship in cases where the nationality of another country is clearly attributable to the applicant.
- They ask why only a selected group of migrants are eligible.
- They see 'fundamental flaw' in claim that CAA and its rules will help persecuted minorities.

religious persecution is inherent in the CAA.

The Union government views the law as a succour for refugees who fled per-

secution from the target countries with state religions.

But only a "selected group" of such migrants are eligible for the benefits of CAA, the petitioners said. Excluded refugee groups continue to remain illegal migrants, barred from seeking Indian citizenship under any mode.

"Even while India is Pakistan in the list of countries, it fails to extend protection to [the] Ahmadly community which is one of the most persecuted groups in Pakistan. It similarly excludes rationalists, atheists and agnostic persons who do not profess any religion," the peti-

tioners submitted.

Refugees from Myanmar are excluded, though the country was a part of British India till 1935 and though the International Court of Justice had found that genocide was perpetrated there against Muslim Rohingyas refugees who are presently, due to persecution, living in India under abject conditions under threat of deportation.

"The CAA and its Rules exclude Sri Lanka. While the Statement of Objects and Reasons of CAA mentions 'Partition' and 'undivided India' as the reason for the selection of non-Muslims as a protected class of refugees, the CAA included Afghanistan which was not a part of undivided India, they said.

"Flawed foundation"

"Thus, it is *ex facie* clear that the foundational claim that the CAA aims to extend citizenship benefits to persecuted minorities is fundamentally flawed, and that it fails to do so arbitrarily chooses between persecuted groups of different kinds. This is not merely an issue of under inclusion *per se*. Rather, the exclusions demonstrate the lack of any rational nexus to the stated object of enacting a refugee policy," the written submissions noted.

Recreating the journey



Celestial experiences: The Indian Space Odyssey; Sounding Rockets to Gaganyaan, a sky show on the Gaganyaan mission launched by the Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium in Bengaluru. The 30-minute show will be open to the public from Sunday. © IISRO/ISROX

Pak. slams Rajnath's 'provocative' remarks

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's comments that "if terrorists run away to Pakistan, we will enter Pakistan to kill them", the spokesperson of Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Saturday denounced the provocative remarks. The spokesperson also asserted that Pakistan stands resolute in its "intent and ability" to safeguard its sovereignty against any "act of aggression".

FULL REPORT PAGE 3

New all-weather road adds to Ladakh's strategic heft

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

The latest feat of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in Ladakh, connecting Himachal Pradesh and Leh through the Nimnu-Padam-Darcha road, has come as a shot in the arm for security forces stationed in the region, and added significantly to India's strategic depth in the hostile neighbourhood.

The BRO's breakthrough, achieved on March 27, has paved the way to open up the far-off Zaskar Valley for the safe-keeping of ordnance depots, away from the prying eyes of China and Pakistan, officials privy to the development told *The Hindu*.

The Nimnu-Padam-Darcha road allows surface movement from Leh to Lohasl-Spiti through the world's highest tunnel at Shinku La Pass at 16,580 feet, which is under construction.

"It will be the first all-weather road connecting Ladakh to the rest of the country," an official said.

The tunnel is likely to be completed by 2025. Maintaining logistics in the absence of all-weather roads to the region, especially during Ladakh's harsh winters, has always been a concern to security strategists.

At present, security forces stock ration and ammunition in the advance to maintain a vigil on the border with China, on the other hand, has already developed all-weather road network in Himachal Pradesh under the aegis of Actual Control (LAC).

The Nimnu-Padam-Darcha road is just 100 km from Manali in Himachal Pradesh.

It is the third axis and



On the frontier: The BRO carries out the work on the Shinku La tunnel near the Zaskar river in Ladakh. PTI

the shortest route compared with the currently operational Manali-Leh road (428 km) and Srinagar-Leh road (439 km).

Once the Shinku La tunnel is thrown open in western Ladakh's Zaskar Valley, the mobilisation of troops to Ladakh will be much faster and less exposed than the current routes passing close to the northern and eastern areas, surrounded by Pakistan and China. "It will make defence preparedness much safer," another official said.

The apprehensions

However, there are murmurs of discontentment among local people over the project.

"On one hand, I am happy to learn that BRO India has connected the strategic Nimnu-Padam-Darcha road in Ladakh recently. However, I am really concerned that it might change the landscape of Zaskar, the land of rich culture and heritage," climate activist Sonam Wangchuk said in a post on social media platform X.

Advocate Mustafa Haji, a social activist from Kargil, said the construction of four lanes on the Kargil-Zaskar section is "completely needless unless it is part of a bigger plan." "Not to mention the number of trees that will have to be cut in the Suru Valley for this project," Mr. Haji pointed out.

The Zaskar Range in Kargil, home to a unique indigenous culture, separates the Zaskar Valley from the Indus Valley of Leh. It is also the source of the Suru river, which flows through Kargil.

States identify thousands of hectares of 'degraded' forest land to be offered for earning green credits

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Weeks after the Union Environment Ministry announced the rules for its Green Credit Programme (GCP), 10 States have identified parcels of degraded forest land, totalling about 3,853 hectares, that will be available for individuals, groups, public and private sector units to earn — and potentially trade — green credits.

A perusal of public documents by *The Hindu* suggests that Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh alone account for up to 40% of the forest land made available.

Under the scheme, registered and approved entities can pay to finance afforestation projects in specific tracts of degraded

Greening degraded lands

The chart shows the area (in hectares) of degraded forest land available for afforestation.

M.P.	Area (ha)
Chhattisgarh	663
Assam	454
Telangana	436
Bihar	400
Rajasthan	360
Gujarat	330
Maharashtra	176
Odisha	150
Daman & Diu	25

is permitted to raise forest and use that land for non-forestry purposes, to provide an equivalent amount of non-forest land to forest authorities and pay them to afford that land.

he condition is that such land be as close as possible to the forest tracts which have been raised. However, if such land is unavailable,

hya Pradesh where large tracts have been historically diverted for mining, getting contiguous non-forest land for compensatory afforestation is challenging.

In fact, the Compensatory Afforestation Fund whose corpus comes from the environmental compensation money paid by companies and which is to be used by States for afforestation, has thousands of acres of unspent money, simply because suitable land for regenerating forests, rivers or degraded, is unavailable.

Bhanudas Pingale, who leads the programme at the ICFRE, told *The Hindu* that the scheme was currently in the "pilot stage", so far, the applicants have been State and central government entities.

In several States including Chhattisgarh and Mad-

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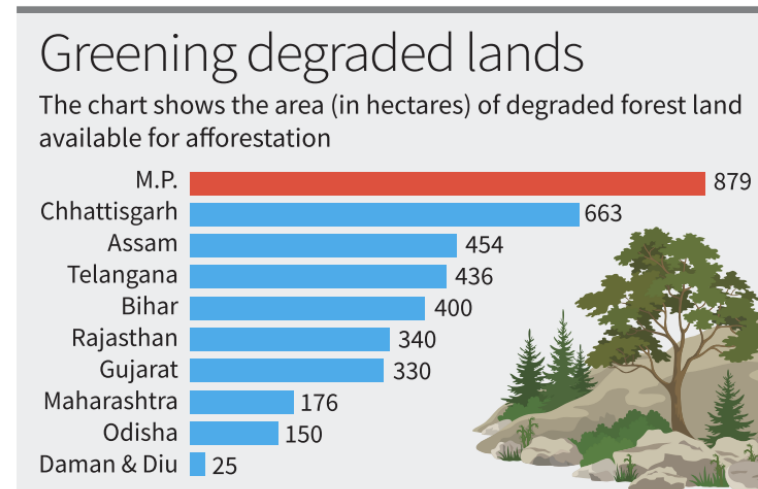
forest and wasteland. The actual afforestation will be carried out by State forest departments.

Two years after planting – and following an evaluation by the International Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), an autonomous body of the Environment Ministry – each planted tree could be worth one 'green credit'.

Offset obligations

These green credits can then be used by companies which have diverted forest land for non-forest purposes and razed thousands of trees to offset some of their obligations under India's compensatory afforestation laws.

These laws oblige any industry or institution that



is permitted to raze forest and use that land for non-forestry purposes, to provide an equivalent amount of non-forest land to forest authorities and pay them to afforest that land.

The condition is that such land be as close as possible to the forest tracts which have been razed. However, if such land is unavailable,

twice the amount of 'degraded' forest land may also be made available for compensatory afforestation.

Additionally, companies must also compensate for the value of the forest ecosystem, called the 'net present value'.

In several States including Chhattisgarh and Mad-

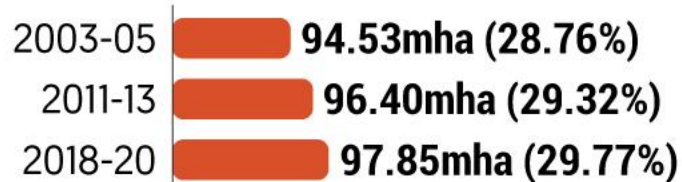
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Desertification & Land Degradation in India

Land degradation
(% of total geographic area):



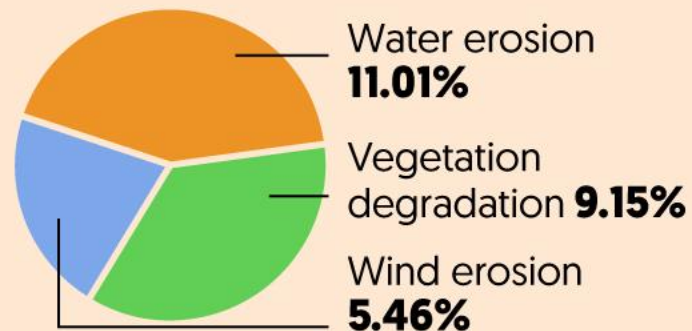
*MHA: million hectares

Desertification in India

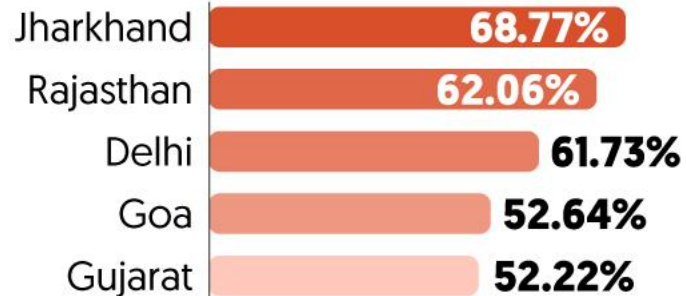


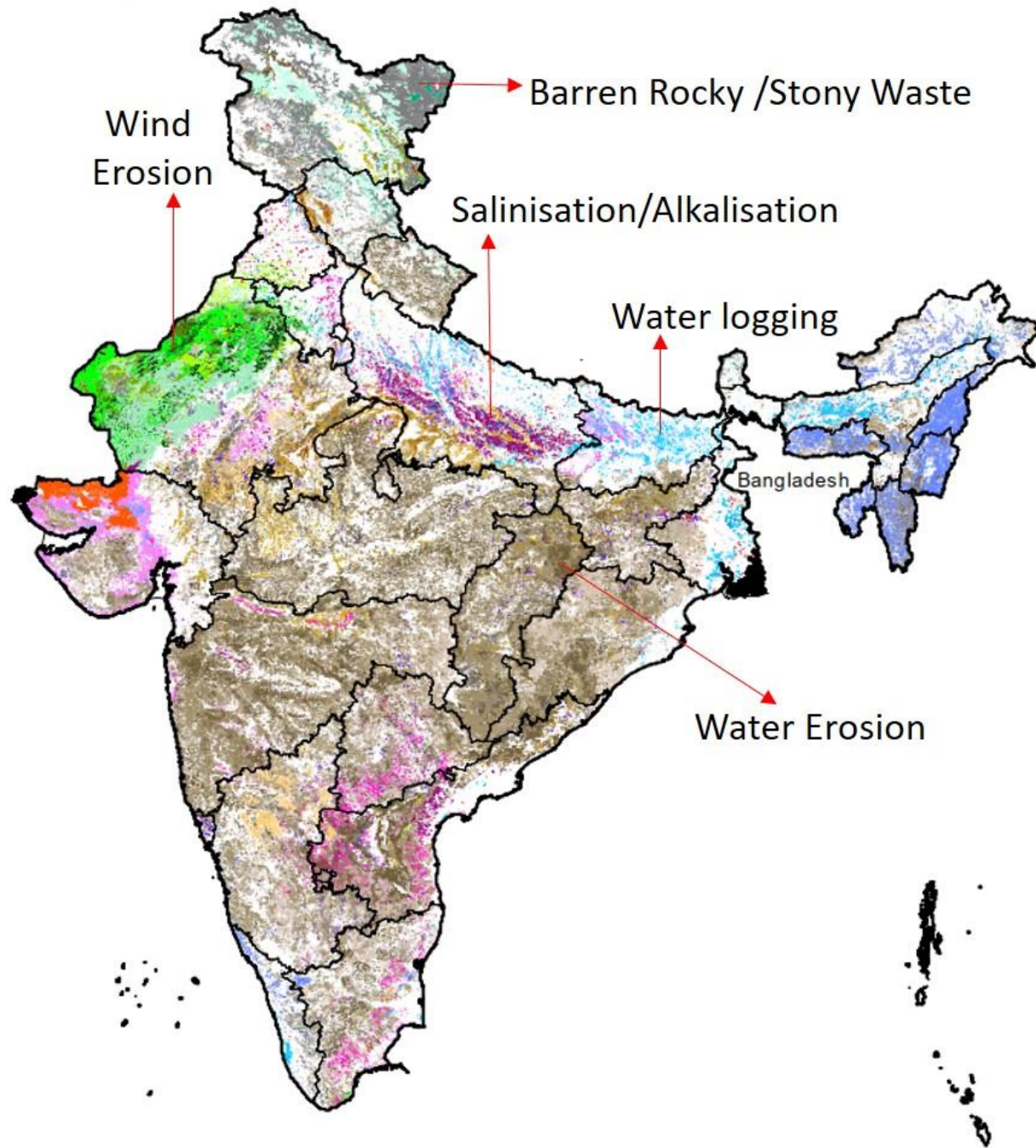
Desertification is land degradation within dry land regions (arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions).

% of desertification due to:



State-wise area under desertification
(% of Total Geographic Area of state):

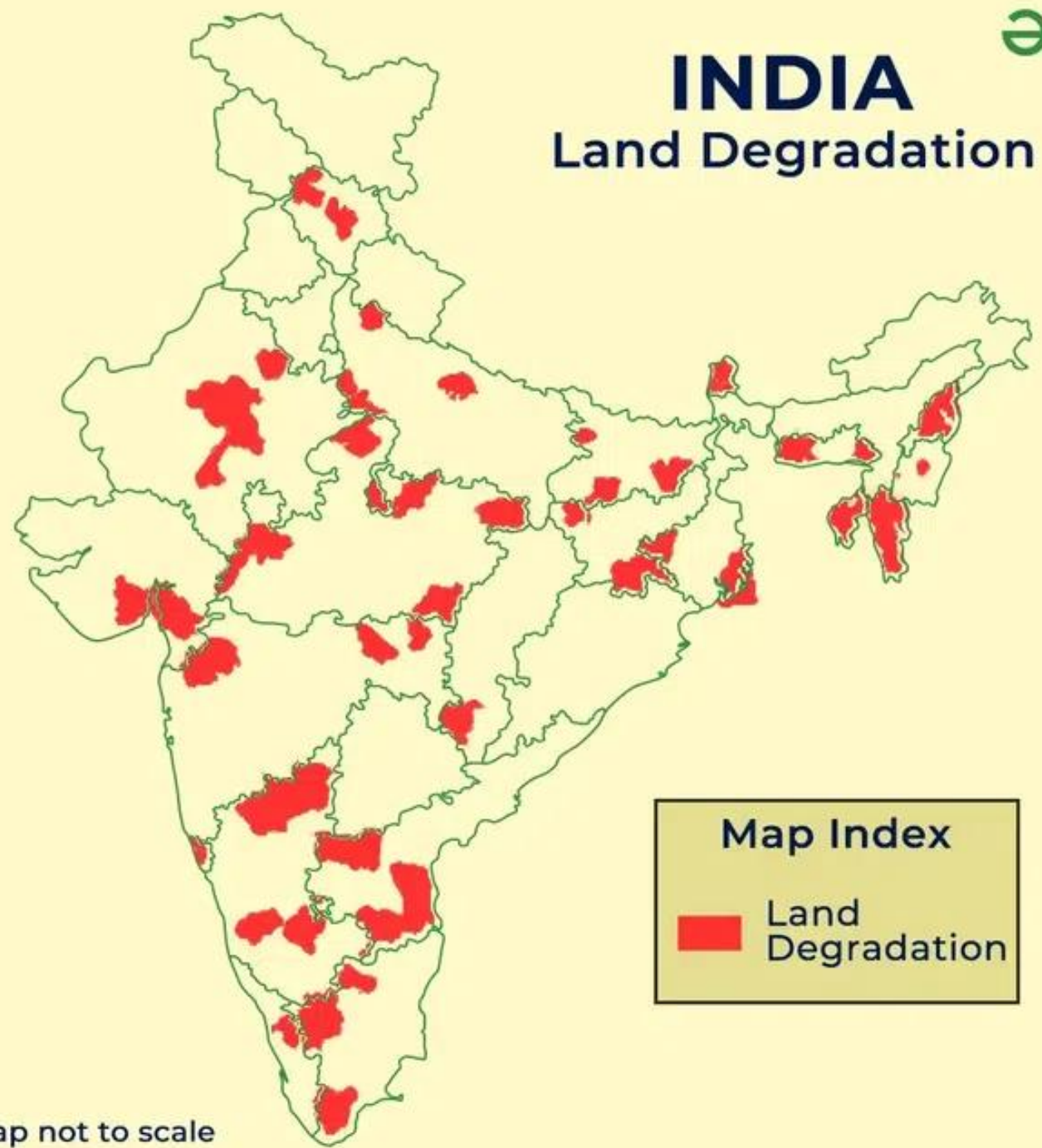






INDIA

Land Degradation



Map Index

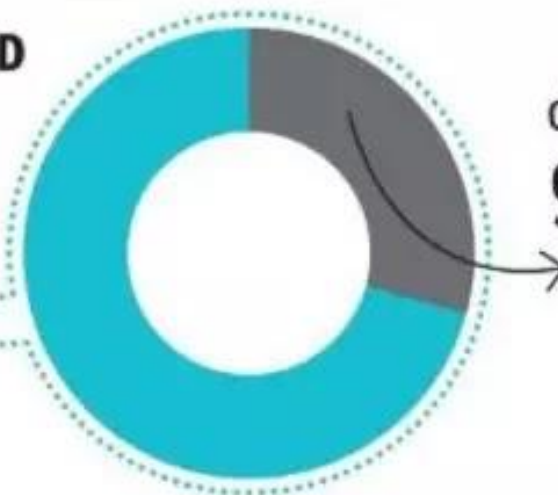
 Land Degradation

*Map not to scale

INDIA'S 2030 TARGET

INDIA RAMPS UP ITS LAND RESTORATION TARGET

India's total geographical area:
328.7 million hectares (Mha)



Land under degradation:

96.4 Mha

(It's 29.3% of India's total geographical area)

Restoration of degraded and deforested land by 2030:

India's old pledge (in 2015)

21Mha

India's new target (in 2019)

26Mha

Causes of desertification and land degradation:

Over-exploitation (farm practices using excessive chemical fertilizers and pesticides), over-grazing, deforestation and poor irrigation practices (Land degradation within dry land regions is called desertification)

Solutions: Afforestation, water resource management and sustainable farm practices

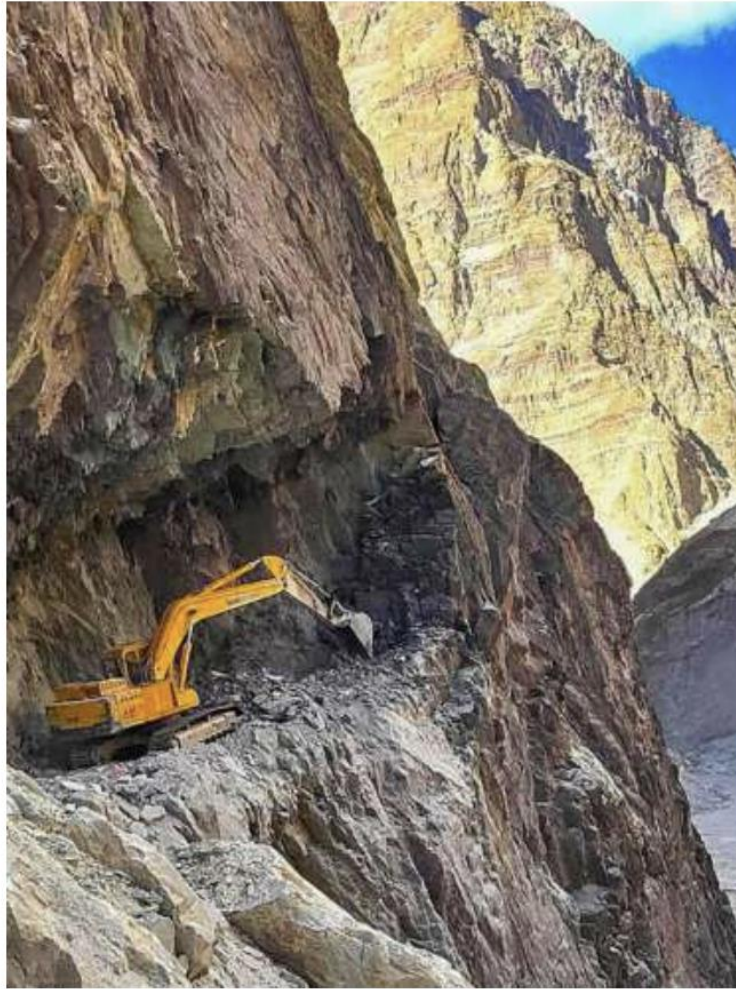
New all-weather road adds to Ladakh's strategic heft

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Map-03: NPD Road Alignment



TARGETS OPPOSITION PARTY'S PROMISES TO MINORITIES

Cong manifesto has stamp of Muslim League, each page reeks of breaking the nation: Modi

Slams Congress for skipping Ayodhya temple ceremony: Is it appropriate?

VIKAS PATHAK & HAMZA KHAN
NEW DELHI, JAIPUR, APRIL 6

ATTACKING THE Congress over the Lok Sabha election manifesto released a day earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Saturday that the manifesto "has the stamp of the Muslim League... the party blamed for the Partition... and "every page reeks of breaking India into pieces" (Hindi punne par Bharat ke tukde karne ki booo aa rahi hai).

BJP TARGETS KHARGE FOR ASKING WHAT RAJASTHAN HAS TO DO WITH KASHMIR P7

He said: "Today the country is being run in one voice that the Congress that fought for freedom died decades ago." Addressing BJP election rallies in Sabar in western UP and Aizmer in Rajasthan, Modi also criticised the Congress for staying leader Sonia Gandhi in Jaipur, on Saturday. P11, Rajar Jan Parus



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Sabaranpur and Congress leader Sonia Gandhi in Jaipur, on Saturday. P11, Rajar Jan Parus

Sonia: Intimidating Opp, making them join BJP... democracy is in danger

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, APRIL 6

FORMER CONGRESS president Sonia Gandhi Saturday attacked the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Union government, stating that the country is under a dictatorship that democracy is in danger and that the light of independence has dimmed. Addressing a rare public rally, a day after the party launched its

CONG'S MANIFESTO SOUL OF INDIA: RAHUL IN HYDERABAD
DECISION 2024: PAGES 9, 10

manifesto, Sonia Gandhi said, "There was a time when, through their struggle, our great ancestors searched for and found the light of independence from under the yoke of darkness. After CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Nitish exit setback, INDIA bloc needs common agenda, says Sanjay Singh

'Congress should declare candidates in Delhi soon so that campaign can start'

MALLIGA JOSHI
NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

AAM AADMI Party Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh, who was granted bail by the Supreme Court in the Delhi case, Saturday said the departure of Nitish Kumar from the INDIA bloc was a major setback, adding that history would not judge him kindly. In an interview with The Indian Express, he also said the Opposition alliance must prepare a common minimum programme ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

Singh was a key member in alliance discussions before his arrest in October last year. At that time the Janata Dal (United) president and Bihar Chief Minister was a vocal anti-BJP leader. Asked what the biggest setback faced by the INDIA bloc so far was, Singh said: "Nitish Kumar ji's departure was completely unexpected. He was going from one place to another to bring opposition parties together and he then joined NDA. Switching positions in this manner impacts your image. You may be able to get power and some benefits in the short term, I don't deny that. But if you switch sides over and over again,



SANJAY SINGH
RAJYA SABHA MP, AAM AADMI PARTY

history will not judge you kindly. You can be remembered either as a coward or as a courageous." "We have to decide what we want to be remembered as. I don't think those who once spoke out against the BJP and have now bowed down before it will be remembered well," he said. Asked about the breakdown of talks between the bloc and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, he said there was a "world of a difference" between the Trinamool Congress chief and Nitish Kumar. "She is doing everything possible to stand against BJP. She is CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE WORLD

EGYPT TO HOST GAZA TALKS; U.S. TO SEND TEAM, ISRAEL UNDECIDED

U.S., AUSTRALIA, JAPAN, PHILIPPINES TO STAGE MILITARY DRILLS IN SCS PAGE 12



Senior citizens cast postal ballots for Lok Sabha elections from their residence in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, on Saturday. The poll panel, in a first for LS polls, has rolled out the vote-from-home option to people above 85 and those with over-40% disability. P17

THE BOOTH, AT HOME

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From Odisha to Cambodia via Vietnam: How agents duped Indian job-seekers

SUJIT BISOIYI & KIRAN PARASHAR
BHubaneswar, Bengaluru, April 6

WITH HIS job as a computer operator in Hyderabad barely enough to make ends meet, Dinabandhu Sahu nurtured a dream like many other youths from his locality in Odisha's Ganjam district — to migrate overseas, earn enough, and return to his village to start something on his own. His ambition led him to Cambodia where, far from his dream being realised, he lost everything, including his wife's jewellery. To support his family of four, Sahu now works at a local fuel station. Sahu, a resident of Biswanapur village who was among



Indians trapped in Cambodia have been forced into cyber crime; and (right) The Indian Express report on the issue

an estimated 5,000 Indians trapped in Cambodia and forced into cyber crime, returned after his case was taken up by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan with the External Affairs Ministry. He was in the country for a month-and-a-half, and returned in September last year. After a report by The Indian Express flagging the circumstances of the 5,000-plus Indians, the MEA last week said

The Centre is collaborating with Cambodian authorities and has rescued and repatriated about 250 Indians so far. Apart from Sahu, The Indian Express spoke to two men from Karnataka who managed to return. All of them had similar stories to tell — lack of opportunities at home, agents who exploited their desperation, a job that turned out to be nothing more

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 6
DAYS AFTER the Ministry of External Affairs said they have rescued 250 Indians from Cambodia, the Ministry of Home Affairs is planning to file a complaint with the CBI asking the agency to take legal action against recruitment agents. The Indian Express has learnt. As reported by The Indian Express, over 5,000 people are suspected



At Bhubatinagar in Purba Medinipur district on Saturday. P17

NIA team attacked in West Bengal, Mamata & BJP in new war of words

Officer injured, vehicle damaged as agency arrests 2 in 2022 blast case

SWEETY KUMARI & TRIMITRA
KOLKATA, COOCH BEHAR, APRIL 6

WEST BENGAL Chief Minister and TMC leader Mamata Banerjee and the Opposition BJP were locked in a new blame game Saturday after a team of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) was attacked by a crowd while arresting two men who it said were "key conspirators" in the Bhubatinagar blast case in which three persons were killed in December 2022. In a statement, the NIA said one of its team members sustained a minor injury and its official vehicle was damaged as it arrested "two key conspirators amid stiff resistance from an unruly crowd" in Purba Medinipur district.

The aggressive crowd tried to stop the NIA team and its security component from moving

3 months after ED attacked

THE ATTACK on the central agency team brought back memories of Sandeshkhali where an Enforcement Directorate team was assaulted while conducting a search at the house of TMC strongman Shahjahan Sheikh. The new incident will deepen the fault lines in Bengal where the TMC and BJP are in a bitter contest for Lok Sabha seats.

towards Bhubatinagar police station to complete the arrest formalities. NIA has lodged a complaint at the local police station in this regard. Manorama CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

After tax searches, FDI questions, BBC hives off newsroom in India as separate company

BBC applies for 26% stake in Collective Newsroom, a first in its global ops

RIKITA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

LESS THAN a year after being questioned by income tax authorities for alleged violations, the BBC has hived off its newsroom in India, handing over its publishing license to a private limited company established by its Indian employees — a first for the public service broadcaster's global operations anywhere in the world.

Under this new arrangement, starting next week, a private limited company called the "Collective Newsroom" has been set up by four former BBC employees. Its India offices will produce all of the India content in seven languages for the BBC's

digital services in Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, Tamil, and Telugu. The BBC is learnt to have applied to the Indian government for a 26% stake in this private limited company.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Rupa Jha, Chief Executive Officer of the Collective Newsroom, said, "It's unexpected for the BBC to grant their license to publish to another entity. We will not compromise our journalism and the BBC is solidly behind us." Jha, who was the senior news editor at BBC India, is one of the four founding shareholders of Collective Newsroom. The restructuring of the BBC's India operations was prompted by the new Foreign CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Overrun by invasive chital, a tiny Andaman island counts the cost

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

INTRODUCED to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for game hunting in the early 1900s by the British, a herbivore that multiplies unchecked for years in the absence of large predators has become an expensive and an "invasive" problem for the Union Territory's authorities. For years, the chital (spotted

deer) — the staple food for large predators in forests of mainland India — sustained themselves on local ground vegetation in Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Island, which lies east of Port Blair and does not have any major residential enclaves. But now, with the nearly 500 chital having depleted much of the low-ground vegetation, the Andaman and Nicobar Forest Department has been tracking for the purpose of scientific management. The law Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Wildlife Sanctuary should cause minimum trauma to animals. On February 13, the

merely Ross Island) because the chital population has stretched beyond the carrying capacity of the place," said the source. To deal with the "invasive species," the department has been seeking solutions — to either rehabilitate the chital or relocate them elsewhere. Under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, an officer of the rank of Chief Wildlife Warden can permit translocation for the purpose of scientific management. The law Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Wildlife Sanctuary should cause minimum trauma to animals. On February 13, the



Chital (spotted deer) at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Island in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Getty

Andaman and Nicobar Forest Department reached out to the Dehri-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII), seeking its help in devising safe strategies to manage the deer population. The forest department told WII that it "intends to rehabilitate or relocate around 500 nos. of spotted deer presently located at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Deepwater Biological Park, Chidiyatapu (a small zoo in Port Blair)". In its response in late March, WII suggested that such translocative meetings should be held with "select officials" to develop strategies in handling the chital

population. The institute also shared a list of officials, including officers from Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh forest departments, a retired forest officer from West Bengal. WII scientists and independent experts from the Wildlife Trust of India, a non-profit organisation, besides this, WII told the Union Territory administration that capturing ungulates (hoofed animals) was a "complex process" that required knowledge of the species, the diseases they suffer from, their behavioural ecology and appropriate restraint procedures.

Elaborating on the different methods available for capturing ungulates, WII said the "passive trap and Chhattisgarh has gained relevance over the years". As per the technique, WII stated, a funnel-like fencing is used to herd the animals into a leading chute, which helps lead animals into the trap net vehicle. This technique has been used to capture chital and hard ground swamp deer (sambar) in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal. In Nagais in Madhya Pradesh and swamp deer in Assam. CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EC data show number of women candidates grew 16-fold from 1957 to 2019

Figures show number of women candidates has never crossed 1,000; flagging lack of political will, Centre for Social Research director says parties give fewer opportunities, harder seats to women

NUMBER THEORY

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

In 1957, there were just 45 women candidates contesting the Lok Sabha election; by 2019, this figure had risen to 726, Election Commission data show. The percentage of women in Parliament has increased from 4.5% in 1957 to 14.4% in 2019. The number of male candidates, on the other hand, has grown from 1,474 in 1957 to 7,322 in 2019.

This means that the number of men contesting has multiplied five times; for women, the growth has been 16-fold.

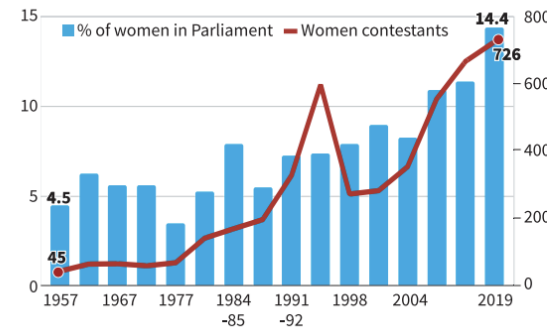
In 1957, a mere 2.9% of candidates were women; in 2019, they made up around 9% of the total pool of candidates. However, the number of women candidates has never yet crossed 1,000.

Gender-wise data are not available for the first Lok Sabha election in 1952.

A perusal of the EC data shows that in the second

Women legislators

The chart shows the share of women in Lok Sabha (left-axis) and the number of women contestants (right-axis) over time



Lok Sabha election in 1957, of the 45 women candidates in the fray, 22 won, indicating a 48.88% success rate. That has declined consistently ever since; in 2019, women's success rate was just 10.74%, as only 78 of the 726 women candidates won their seats.

In the case of male candidates, their winning percentage dropped from 31.7% in 1957 to just 6.4% in 2019. This is not, however, a marker for any trends in the winnability of men and women; it simply reflects

the fact that the number of candidates of both sexes has grown even as the number of seats in the Lok Sabha remained the same, experts note.

"This just shows the maturing of the Indian democracy and the fact that more and more women are entering the fray," says political analyst Tara Krishnaswamy, co-founder of the NGO Political Shakti.

On the huge gap between the numbers of women and men candidates, experts say that women have much fewer oppor-

tunities to contest. "The winnability of women is higher, but there is a lack of will among parties to give them opportunities to contest," says Ranjana Kumari, women's rights activist and the director of the Centre for Social Research. Even when they do, she says, "parties generally give more difficult seats to women. They may be put up against strong candidates or those who can be categorised as having more muscle and money power."

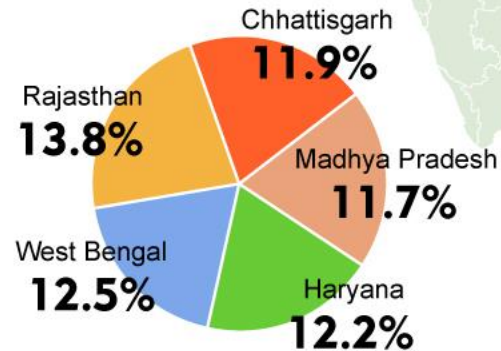
There is thus no level playing field, she says.

Women in Indian Parliament

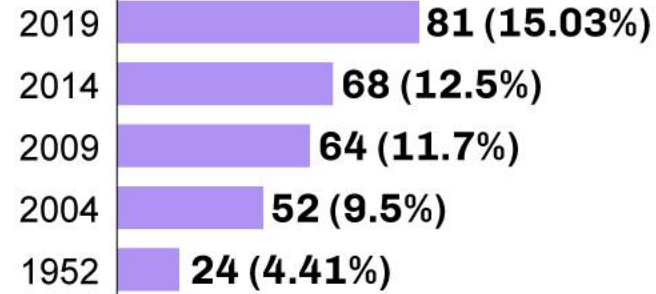


The global average for the share of women parliamentarians stood at **24.6%**

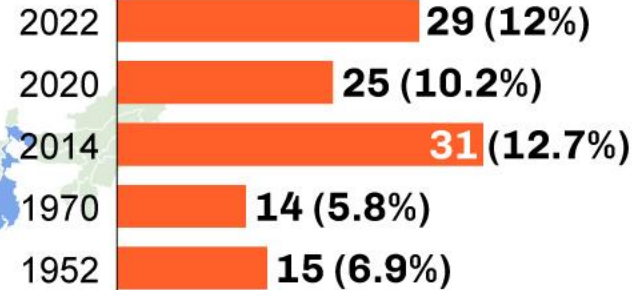
Average share of women MLAs in State legislatures (2008-2018):



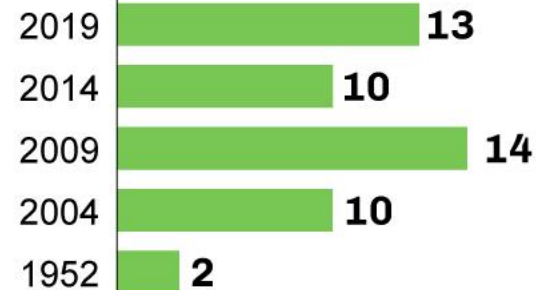
Lok Sabha (Total Member = 543)



Rajya Sabha (Total Member = 245)

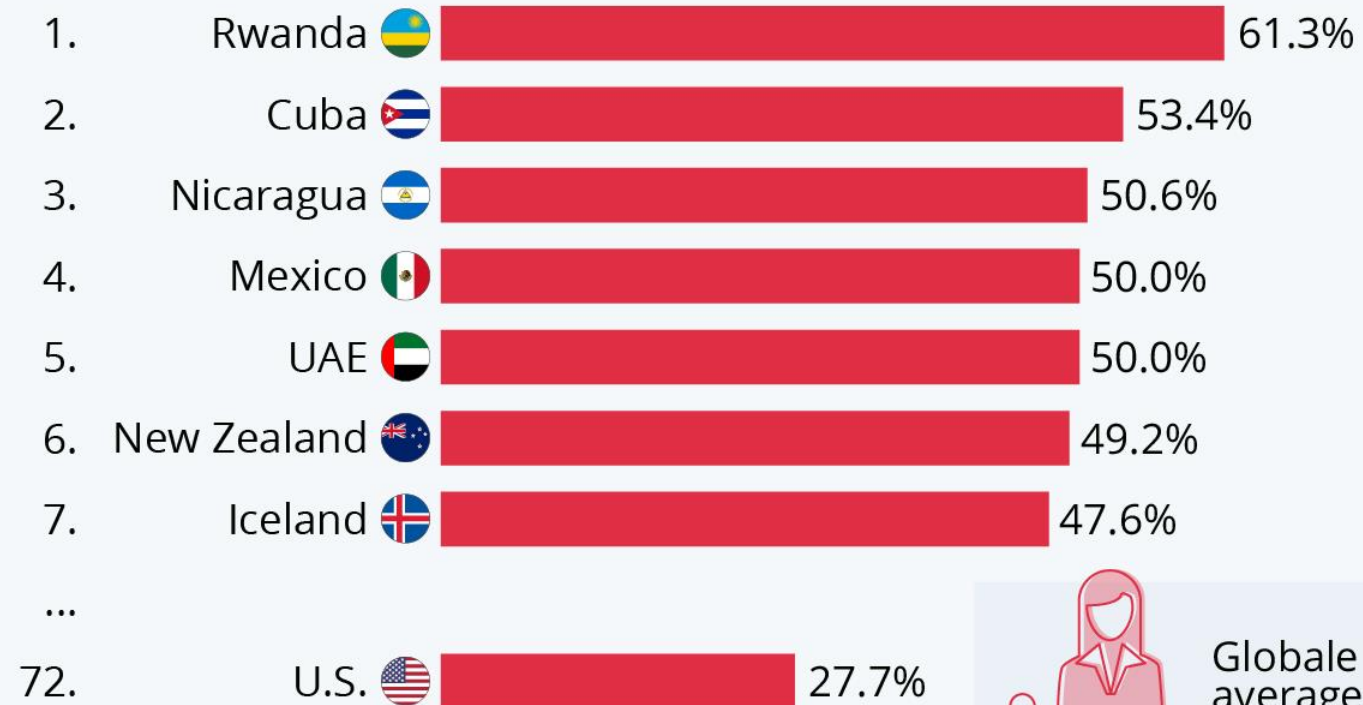


Women in the Union Council of Ministers



The Countries With the Most Women in National Parliament

Share of women in the national unicameral or lower house of parliament (as of Jan 2022)

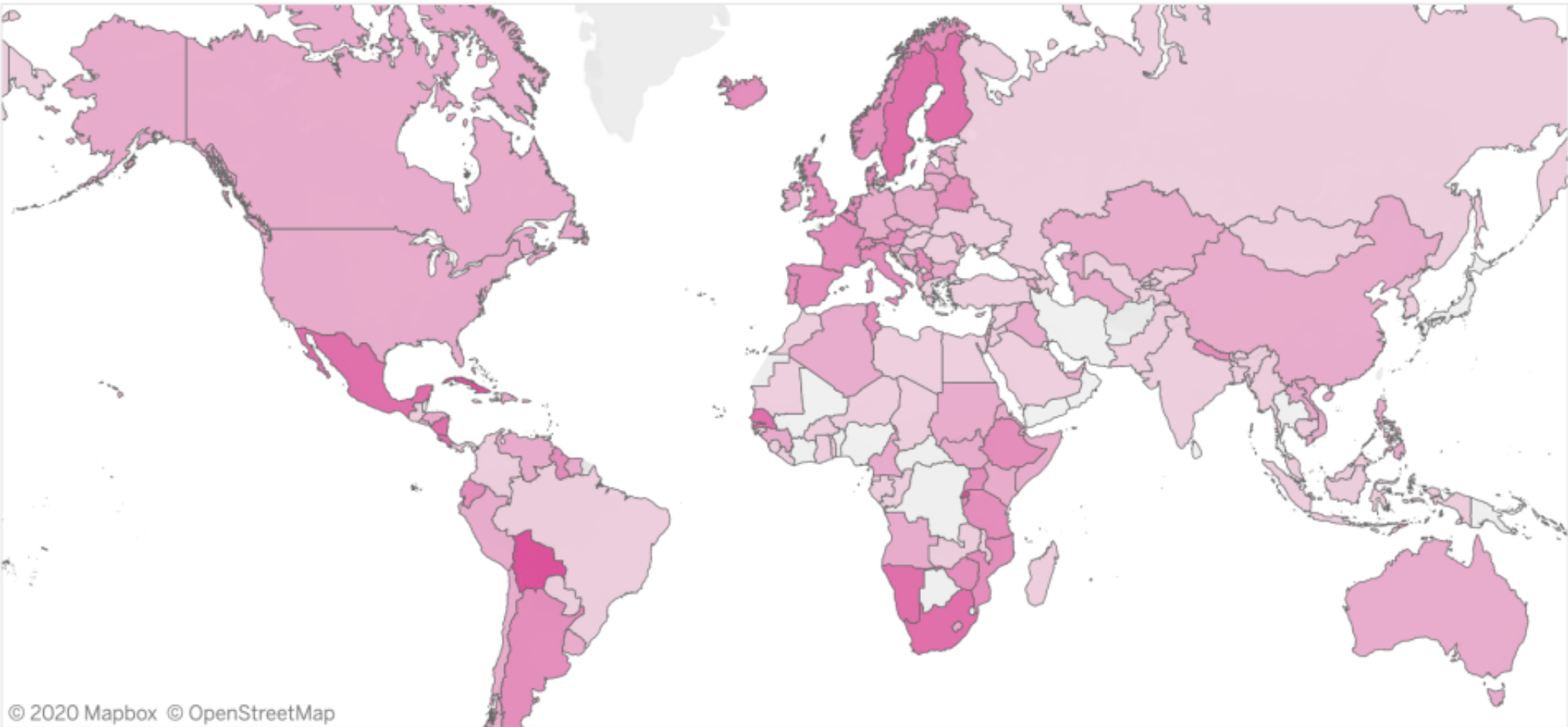


Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union



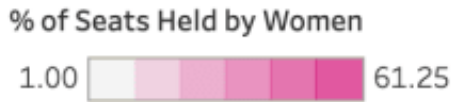
FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

Seats Held by Women in Parliament Around the World

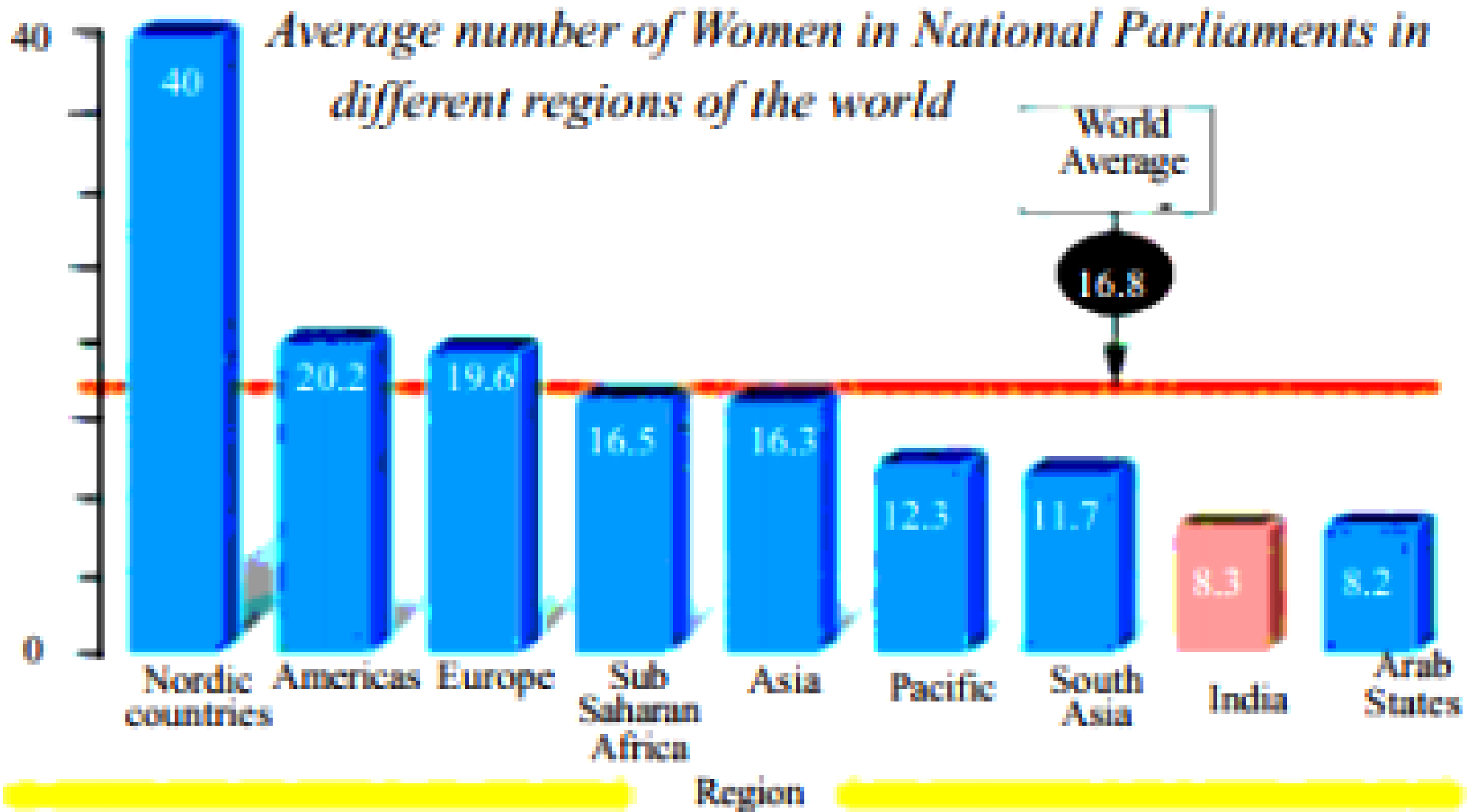


This map shows the proportion of seats held by women in their national parliaments around the world. Use the slider below to see how the distribution changed over recent years.

Year

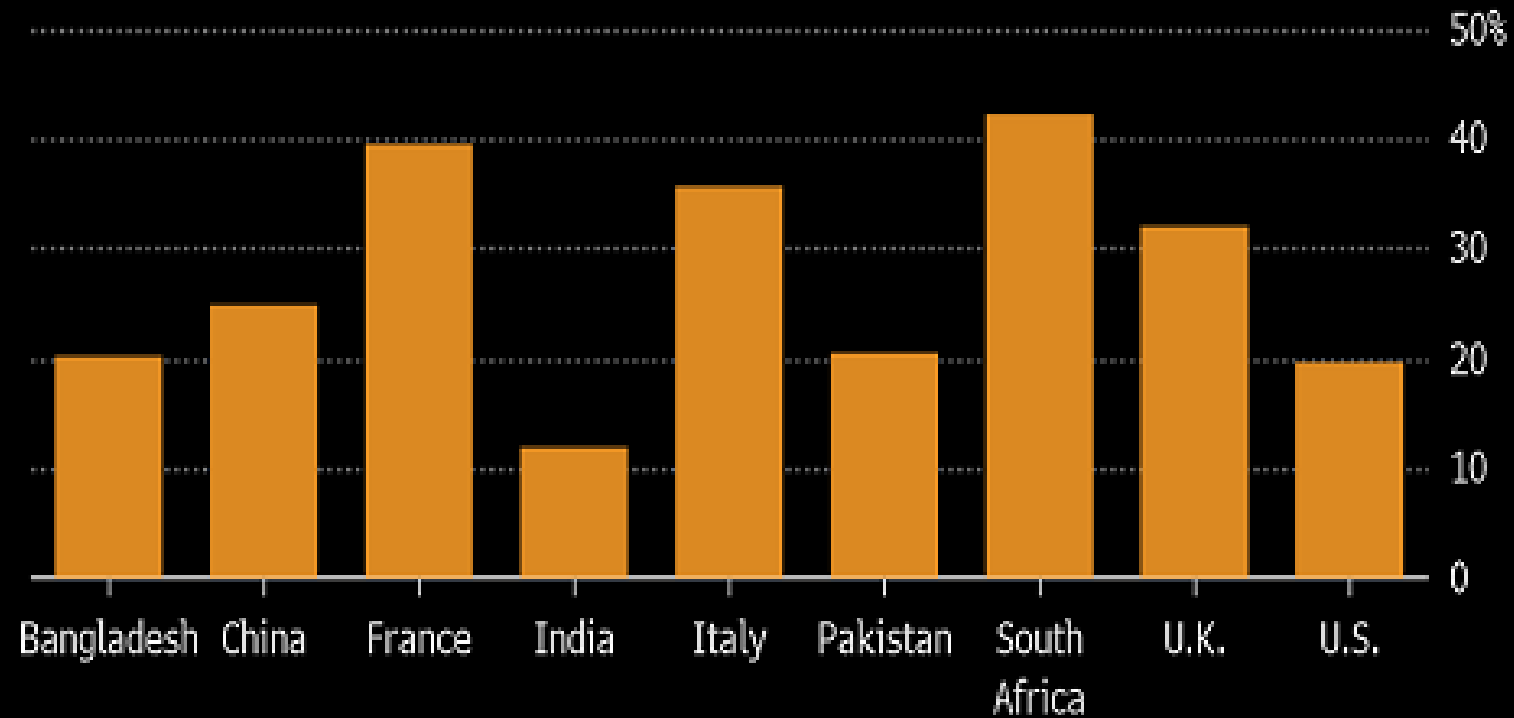


Values represent exact proportion in percentage extracted from data.un.org.



Where Are The Women?

India has fallen behind in women's representation in parliament



* Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament in 2018

Source: World Bank

Bloomberg

How genetics is revealing the biology of skin colour is more than skin-deep

Advances in genomics are improving our understanding of skin pigmentation. In a paper published recently by *Nature Genetics*, for example, researchers used genome editing and chromosomal conformational capture to expand the repertoire of genes we know to be involved in processes driving pigmentation diversity

Siddhar Sivasubbu
Vinod Scaria

Skin, with its wide spectrum of textures, hues, and histories, has long captivated the imagination of poets and storytellers. It has served as a canvas for the expression of beauty, identity, and cultural symbols. The diversity of skin colour across human populations is a product of human genetics, the migration of peoples, and the complex interplay between genes and the environment.

Together with its colour, skin opens a window into the underlying human pathophysiology, and not just because it's the largest organ — and has, as a result, been the subject of many scientific and medical investigations as well. The natural colour of human skin and the changes therein help clinicians diagnose a number of medical conditions. For example, genetic defects can result in the absence of pigmentation by birth, such as albinism; partial or complete depigmentation can also result in disorders like vitiligo. A number of drugs, including antimetabolites and chemotherapy agents, also cause skin pigmentation.

But for all of skin's significance and wonder, its colour has also been the basis of social hierarchies, racism, and other forms of discrimination. Recognising the biological basis of skin and celebrating the diversity of skin colour could instead foster a deeper appreciation of human differences and promote inclusivity.

Light and dark skin
The pigment melanin determines the colour of the skin. It is produced by cells called melanocytes. A number of genes and factors influence the type and size of melanin particles as well as their production, transport, and distribution.

Scientists widely believe exposure to ultraviolet light from the sun has been the dominant driver of skin colour throughout history. Across geographies, colours have also displayed a close connection to latitude, which in turn is correlated with ultraviolet exposure. There is also consensus that lighter skin colour across higher latitudes is the result of humans adapting to produce vitamin D again, a process induced by ultraviolet light. Skin pigmentation also protects nutrients like folate from being broken down by ultraviolet radiation.

This said, systematic approaches to understanding and documenting skin colour have only been of recent interest. In 1735, the Swedish biologist Carl Linnaeus classified humans into four



Scientists widely believe exposure to ultraviolet light from the sun has been the dominant driver of skin colour. CHURCH OF THE KING/UNSPASH

“varieties” based on skin colour. The Austrian anthropologist and explorer Felix von Lisch designed a scale with which to compare skin colour in the 19th century. The scale has 36 colours and is used to this day.

Dark-skinned humans evolved from apes around 1.2 million years ago by shedding body hair and adapting to ultraviolet radiation. Skin colour is also one of the more striking phenotypes (attributes produced by genes) interactions with the environment in humans, being closely related to their migration and adaptation as they moved out of Africa around 100,000 years ago. Researchers have found genes associated with the melanocortin 1 receptor, a protein associated with the creation of light skin, in the DNA of Neanderthals from Spain and Italy but not from Croatia, and not in Denisovans.

A few genes
As for modern-day human skin colour: the prevailing hypothesis is that it's the result of natural selection across a few genes. Two of these, *SLC24A5* and *SLC45A2*, are the most well-studied. They affect skin colour in modern Eurasians. Other genes like *MCH1*, *TYRP1*, and *OCA2* affect that of East Asians. And all of them show signals of natural selection.

Researchers widely believe Europeans and East Asians adapted to have lighter skin through independent processes. Some evidence has been found for natural selection in Europeans around 11,000–19,000 years ago. A 2015 study led by Harvard Medical School, together with

several international organisations, suggested Europeans became mostly light-skinned at least 4,000–6,000 years ago. Later, the admixture of global populations plus local adaptations resulted in the large diversity of skin colour we observe today.

There are many exceptions to this general rule, however. For example, the Inuit people who have inhabited Alaska for more than five centuries, have darker yellowish brown skin compared to other populations at the same latitude. This has been a puzzling exception for many years. Researchers have hypothesised a high vitamin D intake and high ultraviolet exposure due to longer days have combined to create this anomaly.

Inspiration to harmony
Human genetic conditions like albinism — which results in partial or complete loss of pigment in the skin — provide insights into the biology of skin pigmentation and how society addresses people with rare conditions. Around one in 20,000 individuals around the world is estimated to have this condition, but the prevalence could be 20 times higher among the

THE GIST

Scientists believe exposure to the sun has been the dominant driver of skin colour. Colour has also displayed a close connection to latitude, which is correlated with ultraviolet exposure

Dark-skinned humans evolved from apes around 1.2 million years ago by shedding hair and adapting to ultraviolet radiation. Skin colour is also one of the more striking phenotypes in humans, being related to their migration and adaptation as they moved out of Africa 100,000 years ago

Modern-day human skin colour developed out of natural selection. Europeans and East Asians adapted to have lighter skin through independent processes. Some evidence has been found for natural selection in Europeans around 11,000–19,000 years ago

Tonga people of Africa and 120 times higher among the Guna people of South America. Individuals with albinism are highly predisposed to developing skin cancer, not to mention having to suffer regressive social attitudes.

The latest advances in genomics are improving our understanding of the biology of skin pigmentation. In a paper published in the journal *Nature Genetics* in January 2024, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania used genome editing and chromosomal conformational capture to identify the regulators of a number of genes involved in skin pigmentation. They identified the mechanisms by which mutations in the regulatory regions of four genes could affect pigmentation and its variability. They also identified a new gene, *CYB5G1A3*, that regulates skin pigmentation. This work expanded the repertoire of genes we know to be involved in the processes driving pigmentation diversity.

By exploring the scientific and genetic underpinnings of skin colour diversity, we gain insights into the biological processes and our shared evolutionary history as well as confront the complexities of social norms, privilege, and prejudice. Embracing diversity prepares us to embrace the rich heritage of humankind and inspires us to strive for more harmonious living. (The authors are senior consultants at the Vishwanath Cancer Care Foundation and adjunct professors at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. All opinions expressed are personal.)

BIG SHOT



Volcanic vortex rings emerge from a new pit crater on the north side of the southeast crater of the Etna volcano in Sicily, Italy, on Friday. While the physical conditions under which volcanic vortex rings form are still not entirely known, scientists believe they are the result of a combination of fast gas release at the top of the magma conduit and regularly in the shape of the emitting vent. AP

WHAT IS IT?

Gape limitation: are you a big eater?

Arkatapa Basu

In ecology, ‘gape limitation’ stands for the idea that a predator can only eat things that fit in its mouth. Imagine a snake trying to eat a rabbit. If the rabbit is too big to fit in the snake's mouth, gape limitation says the latter won't be able to eat it. Researchers pay attention to the concept because it specifies which animals can eat which other animals. For example, small predators can only eat small prey, while bigger predators can eat bigger prey. From the prey's point of view, if a predator's mouth isn't big enough to devour it, perhaps those animals are safe from that predator. This barrier can in turn lead to evolutionary pressure that selects the predator's ability to eat smaller prey or, conversely, adaptations in the predator's behaviour to overcome gape limitation. Gape limitations also influence how animals evolve over time. Prey animals might get faster or grow bigger to avoid being eaten by predators with smaller mouths. On the other hand, predators may evolve larger mouths to eat larger prey.

Understanding gape limitations is essential to predicting how changes in predator or prey populations, changes in habitats, and/or environmental disturbances could affect the structure and function of



Small predators can only eat small prey, while bigger predators can eat bigger prey. © iTV news

ecosystems. The study of gape limitations also helps researchers understand the intricate dynamics of animal interactions and the cascading effects they have on biodiversity.

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

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भारत निर्वाचन आयोग
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चुनाव का पर्व
DESH KA GARV

BUSINESS AS USUAL
By UNNAY



IDEA EXCHANGE
"If anybody has any objection to CAA, please go to the court of law and file a petition"
SARBANANDA SONOWAL
UNION MINISTER FOR PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
PAGE 12

THE WORLD

ISRAEL TO JOIN CAIRO TALKS, REDUCES GAZA TROOPS TO READY FRESH OPS

RUSSIA FOREIGN MINISTER TO VISIT CHINA TO DISCUSS UKRAINE WAR

IN BJP BASTION: MEERUT AND GHAZIABAD

Little love for Opp, but voters say 'missing vipaksh not good'

LIZ MATHEW
MEERUT, GHAZIABAD, APRIL 7

"THE RAM Temple has been built... But what about our small neighbourhood temple for Hanuman?"
Singh, a resident of Arhala village in Ghaziabad, head of the organising committee of the local Hanuman Temple, which was brought down for reconstruction. Work on it is stalled due to the



DECISION 2024

IIT-Delhi lends hand to students: Support panel, campus stay with kin for some

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

VIDHEESHA KUNTAMALLA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 7

TO EASE pressure on students struggling with studies, which in extreme cases has resulted in suicides, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi has formed a panel of faculty members and students to help its undergraduate students with a "poor academic record", and in "exceptional cases" has also permitted a few students to stay with a

INDIA URGENTLY NEEDS TO SHIFT TO SOLAR POWER, SAYS CJI-LED BENCH

Right against adverse effects of climate change part of rights to life, equality: SC

States owe a duty of care to citizens... right to a healthy, clean environment part of this duty: Court

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, APRIL 7

IN A significant ruling, the Supreme Court has expanded the scope of Articles 14 and 21 to include the "right against the adverse effects of climate change". Article 48A of the Constitution provides that the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country. Clause (g) of Article 51A stipulates that it shall be the duty of every citizen

of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures. Although these are not justiciable provisions of the Constitution, they are indications that the Constitution recognises the importance of the natural world," a three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud has said. "The importance of the environment, as indicated by these provisions, becomes a right in other parts of the Constitution,



CJI D.Y. Chandrachud wrote the ruling for the bench

In 6 years, two-thirds of probe requests by anti-graft unit pending

MAHARASHTRA

MUMBAI, APRIL 7

A KEY AMENDMENT to the Prevention of Corruption Act by the Central government in July 2018 has resulted in Maharashtra's Anti-Corruption Bureau waiting for months and years to complete financial irregularities in almost two-thirds of its cases. As per data obtained by The Indian Express from the state ACB, of the 547 requests sent as on March 2024 for approval to conduct an inquiry against an official suspected to have been involved in a financial irregularity, the ACB received approval in

THE WAIT CONTINUES

No. of ACB requests for initiating inquiry pending for over four months	48
Department	
Urban Development	81**
Revenue	45
Rural Development	40
Public Works	33
Health	17
*Anti-Corruption Bureau	
** Two of the 81 requests have a pendency of below 90 days	

only 51 cases. While permission was rejected in 126 cases, inquiry could not be carried out in as many as 344 cases. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

PERFECT LANDING

A fighter aircraft lands on the Lucknow-Agra Expressway in Unnao on Sunday as part of the IAF's Gagan Shakti-24 exercise. The 10-day drill, which began on April 1, involves emergency landing facility operations at various locations. The drills aim to test preparations for relief ops during calamities as well as enhance overall operational capabilities of the military. **PHOTO BY ANANTHAKRISHNAN G**

AFTER YEAR OF VIOLENCE 'In-camera' meetings, no rallies: Manipur sees muted campaign

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 7

SUKRITA BARUAH
DISPUR, APRIL 7

THE MEIRA Paibis of Imphal's Chingamkha area begin their nightly vigil at a small 'guard-post' at 9 pm. On Saturday, at around 9:40 pm, two women volunteers, working for the Congress candidate from Inner Manipur Lok Sabha constituency joined them for 10 minutes. "We're going to different places tonight to meet some people who have good connections in their neighbourhood, especially women, so that they can know our candidate better, and

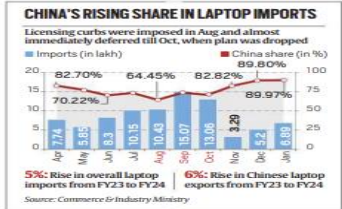


can get people in the locality talking," said one of the volunteers. After a short, quiet conversation with the Meira Paibis — the powerful Meitei women activists of Manipur — they move to their next stop. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

SHIPMENTS FELL AFTER CURBS LIFTED

Licence uncertainty saw PC imports up, China share spiked after plan scrapped

China share in total imports rose from 70% in Aug-Oct to 87.5% in Nov-Jan



SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
& FAVVIDITTA MESHRA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 7

IN JANUARY, nearly 90 per cent of the laptops and personal computers (PCs) imported by India came from China. In the month before that, Beijing's share was well over 89 per cent and, in November, the figure was 83 per cent. In all, until January in the '2023-24 financial year (FY),

nearly eight out of 10 laptops sold in India came from China, shows an analysis by The Indian Express of the Commerce Ministry's import-export data bank. This rising trend came despite New Delhi's attempts to discourage laptop and PC imports from China. These efforts included a short-lived notification by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) in August 2023, which placed the import of these

'UNDO COLONIAL LEGACY'

Land portions from 10 cantonment boards to be run by local bodies

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 7

IN THE first such largescale exercise, the Centre is learnt to have decided to shrink the land under the jurisdiction of 30 key cantonment boards across five states, and put them under the state local bodies instead. It is learnt that the move is part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's overall plan to "undo the colonial legacy" and also usher in a "range of major policy reforms", said a source on condition of anonymity. The affected areas, adding up to about 20,000 acres — almost half of the 10 cantonment boards' combined area of 45,000 acres — includes mostly private properties and land housing municipal amenities like water and

AREA TO BE SHRUNK

Cantonment	Area*
Rangpur Cantt	7,500
Deolali Cantt	7,000
Delhavan Cantt	2,250
Madhura Cantt	1,000
Clemson Town	1,000
Nasirabad Cantt	550
Bahina Cantt	350
Shahjahanpur Cantt	25
Fatehgarh Cantt	50
Ajmer Cantt	40
*In acres	

sewerage pipelines, said the source. While these areas will be placed under the jurisdiction of the state local bodies, the municipal amenities like water and

INDIA URGENTLY NEEDS TO SHIFT TO SOLAR POWER, SAYS CJI-LED BENCH

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“The importance of the environment, as indicated by these provisions, becomes a right in other parts of the Constitution.



CJ D Y Chandrachud wrote the ruling for the bench

Article 21 recognises the right to life and personal liberty while Article 14 indicates that all persons shall have equality before law and the equal protection of laws. These Articles are important sources of the right to a clean environment and the right against the adverse effects of cli-

mate change,” it said.

While the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, gave the ruling on March 21, the detailed order was only uploaded on Saturday evening.

“Despite governmental policy and rules and regulations recognising the adverse effects of climate change and seeking to combat it, there is no single or umbrella legislation in India which relates to climate change and the attendant concerns,” the court noted. “However, this does

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED
E Expanding scope

THE SUPREME Court has, from time to time, expanded the fundamental rights chapter to include various facets of a dignified existence. However, this is the first time that it has included the “right against the adverse effects of climate change”.

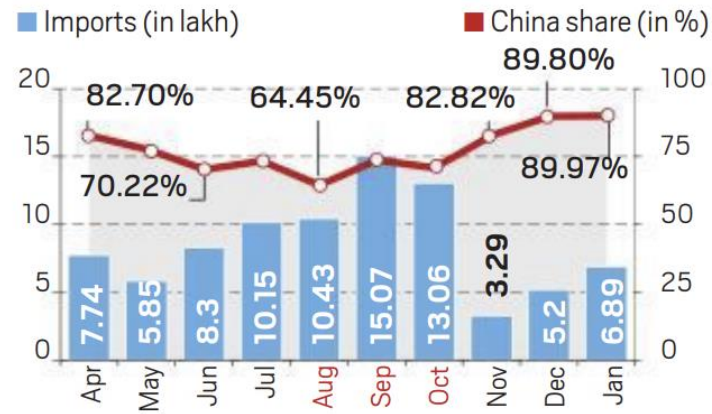
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Licence uncertainty saw PC imports up, China share spiked after plan scrapped

China share in total imports rose from 70% in Aug-Oct to 87.5% in Nov-Jan

CHINA'S RISING SHARE IN LAPTOP IMPORTS

Licensing curbs were imposed in Aug and almost immediately deferred till Oct, when plan was dropped



5%: Rise in overall laptop imports from FY23 to FY24

6%: Rise in Chinese laptop exports from FY23 to FY24

Source: Commerce & Industry Ministry

Water Crisis in South India



The southern states of India, particularly Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana, are facing a severe water crisis due to significantly low water levels in major reservoirs.

What is the Current Situation of Water Crisis in the Southern States? Current Water Situation:

According to the Central Water Commission, most major reservoirs in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana are filled to only 25% of their capacity or even less.

Notable dams such as Tungabhadra in Karnataka and Nagarjuna Sagar on the Andhra Pradesh-Telangana border are filled to 5% or less of their full capacity.

- **Mettur dam in Tamil Nadu and Srisaillam on the Andhra Pradesh-Telangana border are also experiencing low levels, with less than 30% of their capacity filled.**



In troubled waters

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



Chart 1: The chart shows a region-wise comparison of the current storage levels as a share of the total capacities of reservoirs. It also compares the current water levels with last year's levels and the 10-year average

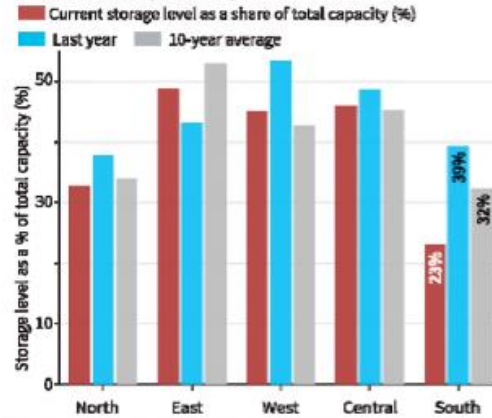
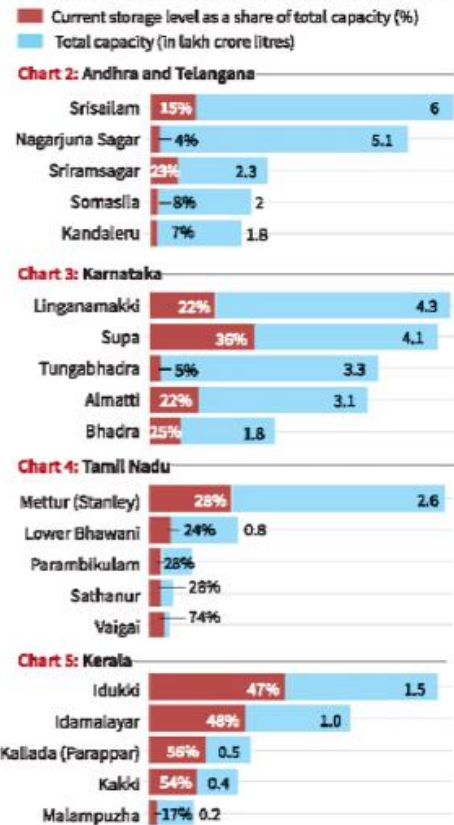


Table 6: The table shows the % of districts, across various levels of rainfall deficits, during the 2023 south-west monsoon. For instance, in about 27% districts of Kerala, rainfall deficit during last monsoon was 40% or more

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

Chart 2,3,4,5: The charts show the current storage levels as a share of the total capacity of major dams in southern States



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A wide, muddy river flows through the center, with a small boat visible on its surface. The surrounding land is divided into numerous green agricultural fields of varying sizes. A small cluster of buildings, including a prominent red-roofed structure, is situated on the left bank. A road or path runs parallel to the river. The overall scene depicts a typical agricultural region.

- **Comparison of Water Levels Across Regions:**

- The southern region is the most affected, with reservoirs collectively filled to only 23% of their capacity, significantly lower than last year and the 10-year average.
- In contrast, other regions like northern, central, western, and eastern India have reservoir levels closer to their 10-year averages.

- Exception in Kerala:
- Kerala stands out among southern states with most major dams filled to at least 50% of their capacities.
- Reservoirs like Idukki, Idamalayar, Kallada, and Kakki are reported to have relatively better water levels.



What are the Reasons for the Water Crisis in South India?

Rainfall Deficiency and El Niño Effect:

Delayed Monsoon and Post-Monsoon Deficiency:

Increased Temperature and Evaporation:

Groundwater Depletion:

Pollution of Water Bodies

Mismanagement and Inequitable Distribution:

- **Which one of the following ancient towns is well known for its elaborate system of water harvesting and management by building a series of dams and channelizing water into connected reservoirs? (2021)**
- **(a) Dholavira**
- **(b) Kalibangan**
- **(c) Rakhigarhi**
- **(d) Ropar**

**With reference to 'Water Credit', consider the following statements:
(2021)**

It puts microfinance tools to work in the water and sanitation sector.

It is a global initiative launched under the aegis of the World Health Organization and the World Bank.

It aims to enable the poor people to meet their water needs without depending on subsidies.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

$$a_0 = 1 [a_0]$$

$$\arcsin(z)$$

S.A.R.A.H

$$x_{n+1} =$$



Hello, I'm Sarah, WHO's Digital Health Promoter

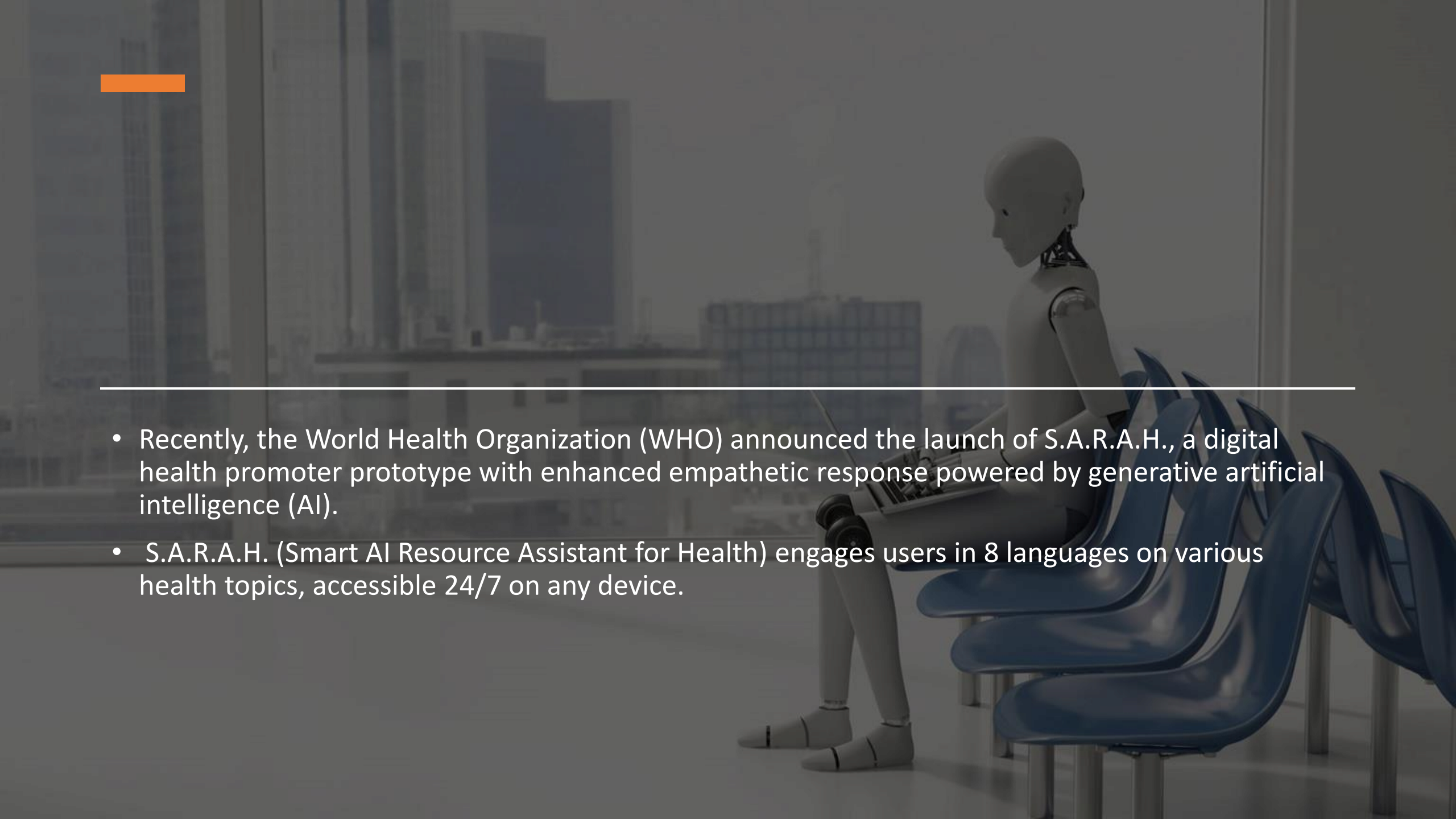
We're almost ready to begin. While I prepare the page for you, have a look at some of the topics I specialize in.

Tobacco and E-Cigarettes

Mental Health

Healthy Eating

Physical Activity

- 
- A white humanoid robot is seated on a blue plastic chair in a waiting area. The robot is positioned in profile, facing left, and is looking out a large window. The window shows a blurred city skyline with several tall buildings. The robot's body is white and appears to be made of a smooth material, with visible joints at the neck, shoulders, and knees. The background is a soft, out-of-focus view of a city with various skyscrapers and buildings under a hazy sky. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source coming from the window.
- Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the launch of S.A.R.A.H., a digital health promoter prototype with enhanced empathetic response powered by generative artificial intelligence (AI).
 - S.A.R.A.H. (Smart AI Resource Assistant for Health) engages users in 8 languages on various health topics, accessible 24/7 on any device.

It **provides information on major health topics**, including healthy habits, mental health, and other risk factors related to overall physiological health.

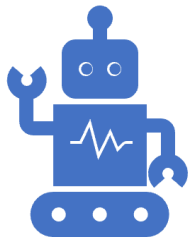
It aims to **empower individuals to optimise their health** and well-being journey, serving as an additional tool to realise their **rights to health**.

It supports users in **understanding risk factors** for diseases like cancer, heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes.

- **World Health Day** is celebrated annually at 7th of April.
- **2024 Theme** - 'My Health, My Right'.
- It aims to achieve access to quality health services, education and information.

- *he World Health Organization (WHO) launched the Artificial Intelligence-powered digital health assistant ahead of World Health Day.*

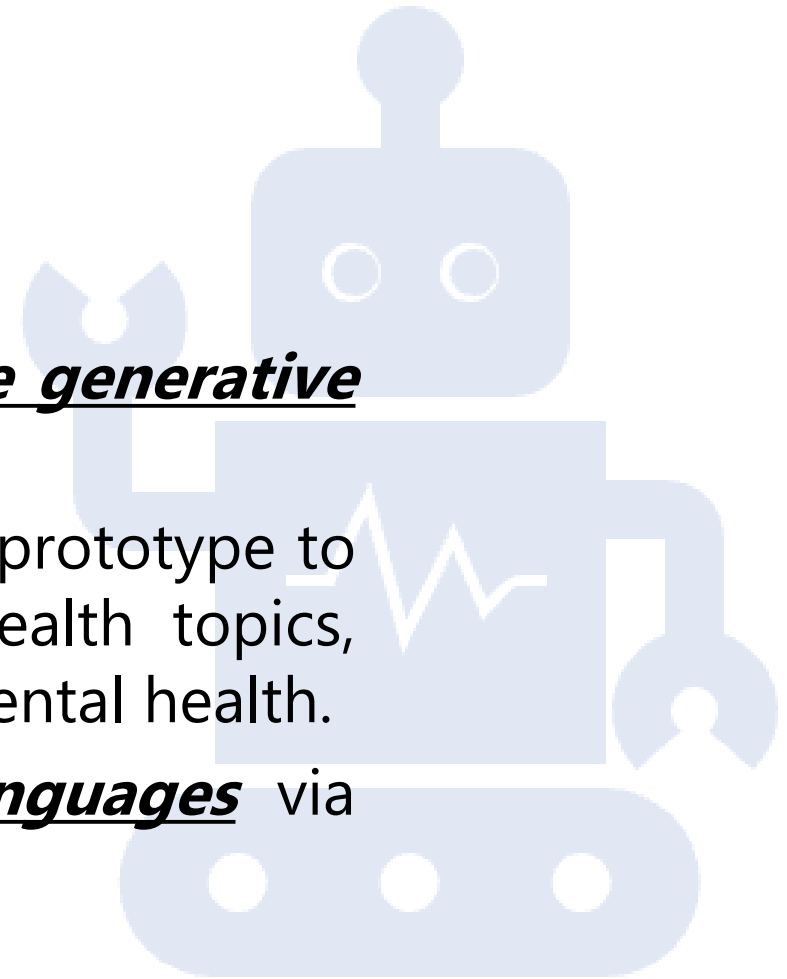
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•**SARAH** - It is a **cutting-edge generative AI technology**.

•It is a digital health promoter prototype to engage users across major health topics, including healthy habits and mental health.

•It is available 24/7 in **8 languages** via video or text.



Defining Generative AI

To understand generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), we first need to understand how the technology builds from each of the AI subcategories listed below.

Expert System AI

Programmers teach AI exactly how to solve specific problems by providing precise instructions and steps.

Artificial Intelligence

The theory and methods to build machines that think and act like humans.



Machine Learning

The ability for computers to learn from experience or data without human programming.

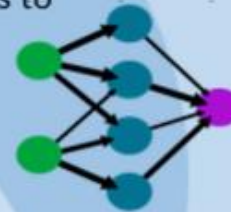
Deep Learning

Mimics the human brain using artificial neural networks such as **transformers** to allow computers to perform complex tasks.



Generative AI

Generates new text, audio, images, video or code based on content it has been **pre-trained** on.



**India Planning to Opt
Living Wage Instead
of Minimum Wage**

India plans to **replace the minimum wage with living wages** by next year with the assistance of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).




About the Living Wage



A living wage tends to be more than the minimum wage as it is the necessary level to afford a decent standard of living

According to the ILO, the living wage is defined as *'the wage level necessary to afford a decent standard of living for workers and their families, taking into account the country's circumstances and calculated for the work performed during normal hours'*.



It tends to be **more than the minimum wage**, which is the lowest amount of remuneration required by law to be paid by employers to employees for work performed during a given period.

- **Global Trends**

- Several countries have increased their minimum wages to protect the workforce against inflation.
 - The UK has increased its national living wage by 9.8%.
 - Canada's federal minimum wages have increased 3.9%.
 - Belgium increased minimum wage surpassing Rs 2,000 per month.

India and Living Wage

While many earn *a daily minimum wage of ₹176 or more*, the **national wage floor**, stagnant since 2017, lacks enforceability across states and leads to wage payment discrepancies.

Its lack of upward movement in wages has led to disparities in wage payments across different states.

However, the exact amount of the living wage in India varies depending on the cost of living in different regions.

As of 2018, the living wage for an individual in India was reported to be ₹10,300 per month.

- **Impacts of Living Wage on Contractual Staff**

- Data sourced from Prime Database regarding more than 1,000 top listed companies show that it is the non-permanent workers that are least likely to get paid anything above the minimum wages right now.
- In FY23, these 1,062 companies together employed nearly three million non-permanent workers and employees.
- Only 208, or 20%, companies paid all their non-permanent workers more than the minimum wages.

-

- **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**

- It is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
- It was established in 1919 by the **Treaty of Versailles** as an affiliated agency of the **League of Nations**, and became the first affiliated specialised agency of the **United Nations in 1946**.
- **Headquarter:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **India is a founder member of the ILO.**

-
- **Nobel Peace Prize (1969):** For improving peace among classes, pursuing decent work and justice for workers, and for providing technical assistance to other developing nations.
 - **Flagship Reports of ILO:**
 - a. Global Wage Report;
 - b. World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO);
 - c. World Social Protection Report;
 - d. World of Work Report;

An aerial photograph of a vast expanse of dark blue water covered with numerous ice floes of various sizes. A large, prominent ice floe is centered in the lower half of the frame, with a white rectangular text box overlaid on it. The text box contains the title "Post Offices in Antarctica" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The surrounding water is a deep, dark blue, and the ice floes are bright white, creating a high-contrast scene. The perspective is from directly above, looking down on the ice and water.

Post Offices in Antarctica

-
- Recently, the Chief Postmaster General Maharashtra Circle inaugurated the **Bharati Branch Post Office at Bharati Station of Antarctica** accompanied by the introduction of a new PIN code, **MH-1718**.
 - **Brief History of Post Offices in Antarctica**
 - In **1984**, shortly after the inaugural expedition to Antarctica, **India established its first-ever post office at Dakshin Gangotri** — the pioneering scientific base.
 - The eventual submersion of Dakshin Gangotri under ice during the **late 1980s**, leading to its **decommissioning**.

On January 26, 1990, a new post office branch emerged at India's Maitri research station in Antarctica.

Maitri and Bharati Post Offices

These are research bases of India in Antarctica spanning a distance of 3,000 kms.

They stand as a testament to the nation's enduring presence in the polar landscape, both falling under the purview of the Goa Postal Division.

1 - No military use

2 - Freedom of scientific investigation

3 - Free exchange of scientific plans and data

4 - Any territorial claims put on hold

5 - Nuclear free zone

6 - Applies to land but not seas

7 - All stations open to inspection by other nations

8 - National laws apply to citizens not to areas

9 - The treaty may be modified at any time, requires unanimous agreement of treaty nations

10 - All treaty nations to ensure no-one carries out acts against the treaty

The Antarctic Treaty Main Points



About Antarctic Treaty

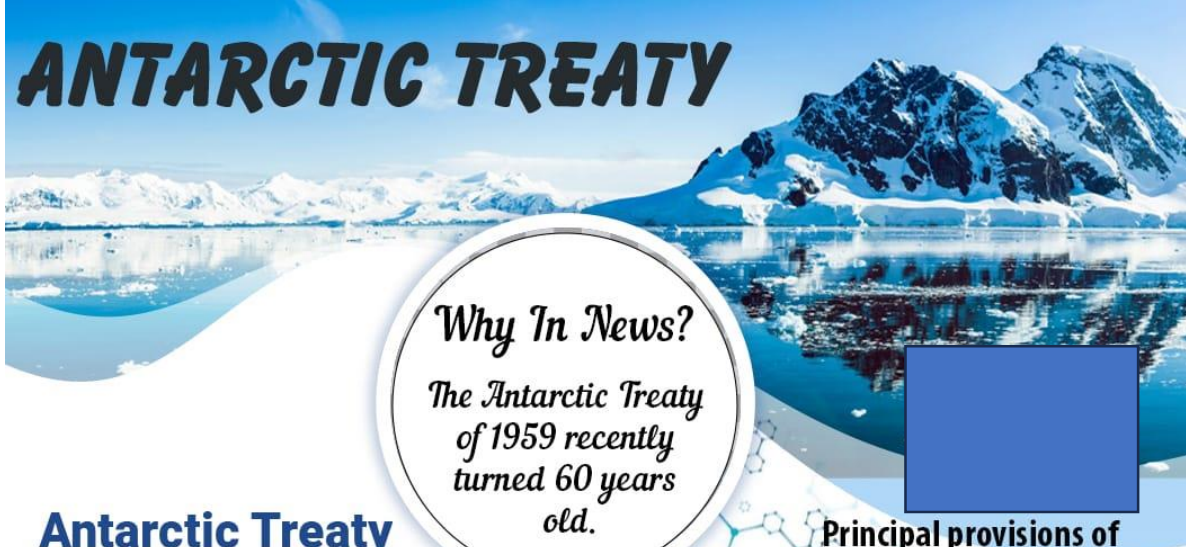
Antarctica is all of the land and ice shelves south of **60°S latitude**.

Antarctic Treaty is the only example of a single treaty that governs a **whole continent**.

Signatories: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the UK and the US.

Currently there are **54 members** (including India); HQ: Buenos Aires (Argentina)

ANTARCTIC TREATY



Why In News?

The Antarctic Treaty of 1959 recently turned 60 years old.

Antarctic Treaty



It went into effect in 1961 and made the Antarctic Continent a demilitarized zone that was to be used primarily for scientific study. It is still the sole instance of a single treaty governing an entire continent.

Principal provisions of Antarctic Treaty

Encourages scientific research to be conducted freely. The continent to be used for peaceful purposes only. Military activities, nuclear tests, and the disposal of radioactive waste are all prohibited.

Antarctic Treaty System

The 1959 Antarctic Treaty. The 1972 Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals. The 1980 Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. The 1991 Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty.

Indian Antarctic Programme


Dakshin Gangotri
Maitri
Bharati
India Post Office in Antarctica



A vintage station wagon is shown from a rear perspective, driving on a road that leads towards a large, glowing sun. The sun is partially obscured by a dark blue rectangular box containing the text 'LUPEX Rover'. The scene is set against a backdrop of palm trees and a city skyline. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with a few stars visible. The overall mood is nostalgic and scenic.

LUPEX Rover

-
- *JAXA-ISRO unveils LUPEX rover for moon's polar exploration.*
 - **LUPEX Mission - LU**nar **P**olar **E**xploration Mission is slated to be launched in 2025.
 - It aims to explore the polar regions of the Moon to study its geology, resources, and potential for future human missions.
 - It will be accomplished in partnership of **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)** with the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**.

- 
- The **launch vehicle and rover** for this programme are supposed to be contributed by the **Japanese agency**, while the **lander** will be contributed by **ISRO**.
 - **Rover** – The rover will be equipped with instruments for measuring the water content of regolith (lunar sand), drilling and sampling.

Plankton crash



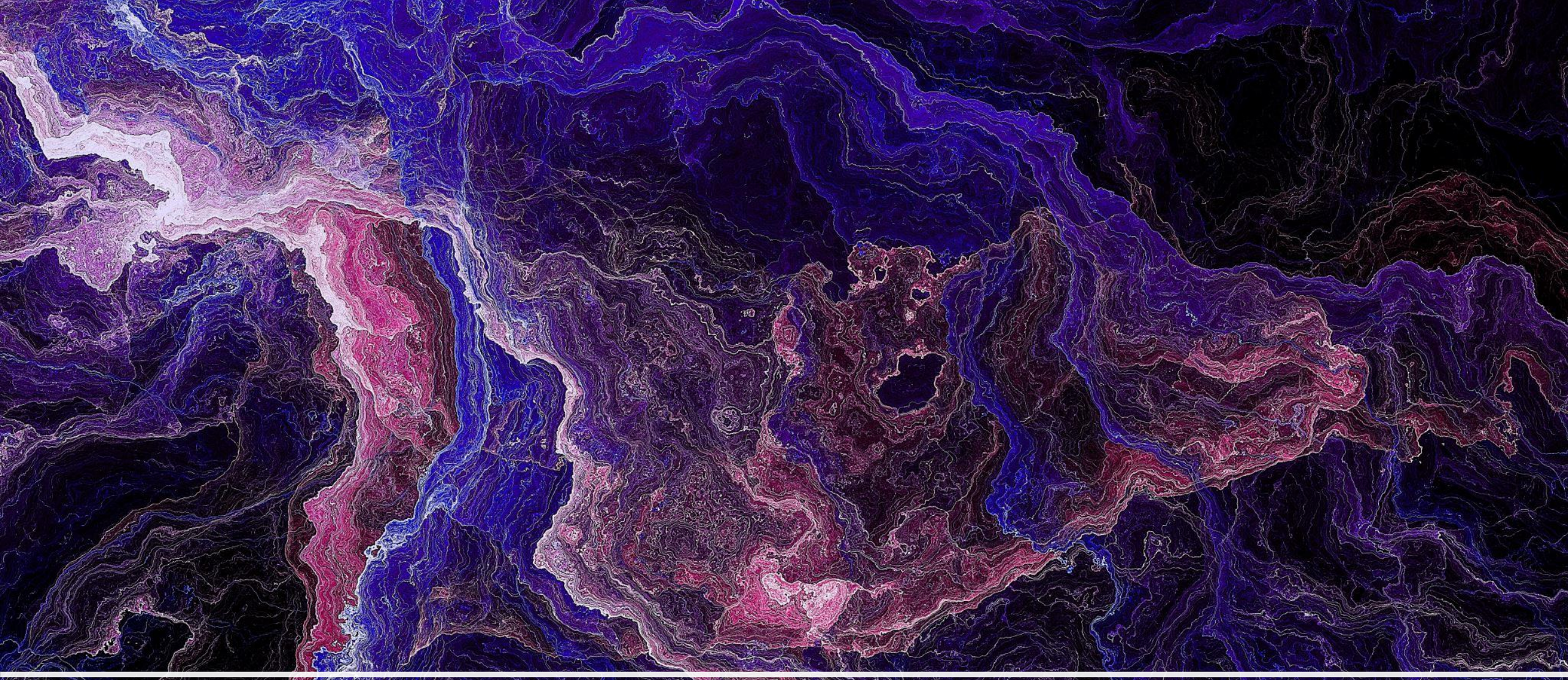
-
- *National Green Tribunal (NGT) panel investigating the cause of the sea turning red in Puducherry has attributed the phenomenon to a plankton crash.*
 - An organism is considered a plankton if it is carried by tides and currents, and cannot swim well enough to move against these forces.
 - A plankton crash can occur in a pond when there is a **lack of nutrients or carbon dioxide (CO₂)**.

This can cause a dramatic decline in the bloom, leaving very few viable plankton in the water.

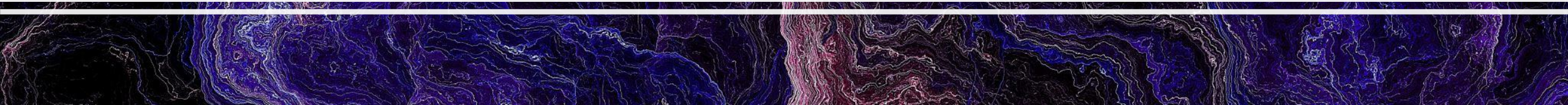
Dead plankton can cause large amounts of stable foam on the surface of the pond.

Plankton crashes can be caused by *blue green algae or dinoflagellates.*

When in large numbers, some plankton *turns red* and releases colored pigments from their cells



Fun fact



Shaving Makes Your Hair Grow Back Thicker: Truth or Tall Tale?

SELF IMPROVEMENT LANGUAGE SPEAKING

Skill24 ₹59999

SOFTWARE ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

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

Software Engineering Course

Skill24 ₹59999

CYBER SECURITY PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

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

Cyber Security Course

Skill24 ₹59999

DATA SCIENCE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

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

Data Science Course

Skill24 ₹59999

BLOCKCHAIN PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION via Singapore Academy

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

Blockchain Course

Skill24 ₹20999

LET'S START TO LEARN SALESFORCE

Salesforce Admin

Salesforce Admin Course

Skill24 ₹20999

LET'S START TO LEARN SALESFORCE

Lightning Web Components

Salesforce LWC Course


Skill24 ₹14999

Skill24 ₹3999

MAKE YOUR BUSINESS THE NEXT UNICORN WITH THE

Skill24 ₹9499



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 suits. The background is blurred, showing more people and a window. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner.

Thank you
guys.
