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LOUD AND CLEAR SC declines petition to end Collegium system NEWS » PAGE 4



PHO-PALESTINIAN PROTESTS Over 100 held on U.S campuses WORLD » PAGE 14



KEJRIWAL'S PLEA Arrests do not affect free elections: ED NEWS » PAGE 4



PANLEY Can green credits benefit India's forests? Will it be used to circumvent laws? OPINION » PAGE 9



CHAMPION RETURNS Chukesh arrives to a rousing welcome SPORTS » PAGE 17

INSIDE



'Will lay down arms if Palestine state is formed'

ISTANBUL A top Hamas political official said the Islamic militant group is willing to agree to a truce of five years or more with Israel and that it would lay down its weapons and convert into a political party if an independent Palestinian state is established along pre-1967 borders. » PAGE 14



Kerala PCC chief says Delhi L-G violated MCC

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM On the eve of polling day in Kerala, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly V.D. Sabhesan on Thursday urged the Election Commission to take action against Delhi's Lieutenant Governor for allegedly visiting homes of churches in Kerala. » PAGE 3



First FIR filed in Sandeshkhali violence case

NEW DELHI The Central Bureau of Investigation has registered the first First Information Report against five "influential" persons and unknown others in connection with the allegation of sexual harassment and land grabbing in West Bengal's Sandeshkhali, said an agency official on Thursday. » PAGE 4



Heatstroke has claimed 30 Thai lives this year

BANGKOK Millions of people across South and Southeast Asia sweltered through unusually hot weather on Thursday, as the Thai government said heatstroke has already killed at least 30 people this year. A wave of exceptionally hot weather has blasted the region this week, prompting thousands of schools across the Philippines to suspend classes. » PAGE 14

EC asks Nadda to explain Modi's poll speech

Campaign speeches made by those holding high positions have more serious consequences, says EC

Sreeparna Chakrabarty NEW DELHI In a first, the Election Commission (EC) has issued a notice for violations of the Model Code of Conduct based on complaints against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. However, taking a circuitous route, the notice was sent on Thursday to BJP president J.P. Nadda, not Mr. Modi. In fact, the notice does not mention the name of the Prime Minister at all. The complaints attached to the notice, however, are those of the Congress against Prime Minister Modi's "malicious election speech delivered at Banwar (Gajasthan)", along with complaints from other parties, such as the Communist Party of India

Similar notice served on Mallikarjun Kharge over complaints concerning him and Rahul Gandhi

In equal measure The EC has sent separate notices to the presidents of the BJP and the Congress. The EC asked J.P. Nadda to bring to the notice of all the star campaigners of the party "the high standards of political discourse and observe provisions of Model Code of Conduct in letter and spirit". Addressing Mallikarjun Kharge, the EC attached the complaints alleging that Mr. Kharge and Mr. Gandhi had violated the MCC by making "false allegations" against the PM and the Congress. In its notice to the BJP president, the EC asked Mr. Nadda to bring to the notice of all the star campaigners of the party "the high standards of political discourse and observe provisions of Model Code of Conduct in letter and spirit". The Commission said it has taken a view that while individual star campaigners will continue to remain responsible for speeches made by them, it will address party chiefs "on a case-to-case basis". Campaign speeches made by those holding high positions have more serious consequences, the EC said. The Congress, which was the chief complainant against the PM's comments, said that the EC sending the notice to Mr. Nadda and not to the Prime Minister was a revealing move. "They [the EC] are super, super cautious when it comes to the Home Minister," Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh told presspersons at party headquarters, adding that the Congress expects the Commission to act impartially and issue notices whenever there is need for one. "There had been no complaint against (former

The EC is 'super, super cautious' when it comes to the Prime Minister, says Congress

PM) P.V. Narasimha Rao, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and Manmohan Singh. This is not the second time we have complained against the PM. We had earlier complained about the Home Minister (Amit Shah), but no action was taken. Action was taken against the Assam Chief Minister," he revealed more. Since the beginning of this poll season, the Commission has issued show-cause notices to Congress leader Supriya Shrinete, BJP MP from West Bengal Dilip Ghosh, Aam Aadmi Party leader Atishi, Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala, and Bharat Kashtra Samithi chief K. Chandrashekar Rao. In all these cases, however, notices were issued directly addressed to each of the individuals against whom complaints were filed. comments made to a publication, had said that President Droupadi Murmu was not invited to the EC. Temple consecration ceremony because she is a member of a Scheduled Tribe. This notice too did not name either of the individual leaders. The notice sent to Mr. Kharge. They alleged that he and Mr. Gandhi had violated the MCC during a speech in Kottayam on April 18 by making "false allegations" against the PM, claiming that Mr. Modi had advocated for 'one nation, one language, and one religion'. The notice also said that Mr. Kharge, in

India to gain from global recovery, says FinMin

Vikas Dhot NEW DELHI The global economy is on the mend with major economies seeing a growth rebound and risk perceptions about geopolitical risks receding, offering a potential upside for growth even as India's economic performance stands out and its key indicators for March reflect a buoyant all-India economic recovery, the Finance Ministry said on Thursday. Terming the high food inflation challenge in several major economies a "situation" warranting continued attention, the ministry noted in its economic review for March that India's food inflation eased to 8.5% last month, from February's 8.7%, while retail inflation slowed to a 10-month low of 4.85%. FULL REPORT » PAGE 12

Phase 2 of Lok Sabha election to be held today; 1,202 candidates in fray in 88 seats

Sreeparna Chakrabarty NEW DELHI The stage is set for polling in 88 constituencies across 13 states in the second phase of the Lok Sabha election on Friday. This phase will see over 1.88 crore voters exercising their franchise in 1,67 lakh polling stations across the country. A total of 1,202 candidates are in the fray - 1,098 male, 102 female and two transgender persons. All 20 seats of Kerala, 14 of the 28 seats in Karnataka, 13 seats in Rajasthan, eight seats each in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, six seats in Madhya Pradesh, five seats each in Assam and Bihar, three seats each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, and one seat each in Manipur, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir will go to the polls. Over 16 lakh polling officials have been deployed for the exercise involving 8.08 crore male, 7.8 crore female and 5,929 transgender electors, the Election Commission said. A total of 34.8 lakh first-time voters and 3.26 crore voters in the age group of 20-29 years are expected to exercise their franchise on Friday. Also, over 14.78 lakh voters above 85 years of age, 42,226 voters above 100 years, and 14.7 lakh persons with disability have been provided the opportunity to vote from the comfort of their homes. Voting in Bengal of Madhya Pradesh, which was also scheduled to be held on Friday, was shifted to the third phase on May 7 following the death of Bahujan Samaj Party candidate Ashok Bakshi. Some of the prominent leaders in the fray include Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Shashi Tharoor, Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar of the BJP, and actor-turned-politician Hemu Malini and Arun Govil. After the second phase, voting will be over in Kerala, Rajasthan and Tripura. The first phase had already been completed in Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim and Lakshadweep. The general election is being held in seven phases. The first phase was held on April 19 for 102 seats across 21 States and Union Territories and saw a turnout less than that of the 2019 election. The third phase of polling for 34 seats in 12 States and Union Territories will be held on May 7.

If BJP wins, simultaneous polls will be implemented

Nisthika Hebbar VISAKHAPATNAM Simultaneous polls are "definitely going to happen" if the BJP comes back to power after the ongoing Lok Sabha election, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday. Speaking exclusively to The Hindu, Mr. Singh, who headed the BJP's manifesto committee, said it was on a par with other ideological goals of the BJP, such as the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code. He said that the dialogue between India and China was ongoing and constructive, and had not led to any further flare-up in tensions after troops clashed in Ladakh in June, 2020. FULL INTERVIEW » PAGE 5

Census delayed as government wants to end SC/ST quota, says Congress

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI The 2021 census has been indefinitely delayed to end reservation for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), the Congress alleged on Thursday, stepping up its attack on the BJP-led government over the issue of caste enumeration. "The census that was due in 2021 has still not been done. It has been delayed by three years. Why? It is because they want to end reservation. They don't want us to know the population of SCs and STs," Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh said at a press conference. "As a result of the delay in conducting the census, about 10 crore people are being denied benefits under the Food Security Act, which has been renamed as the National Food Security Act (NFSA)," he said. "Though the Congress has been alleging that the BJP wants 60 plus seats in the Lok Sabha to amend the Constitution and end reservations, this is the first time that the party has linked the delay in conducting the census to end reservations for SCs and STs in 2024?" The Congress charge

As a result of the delay in conducting the census, about 10 crore people are being denied the benefit under the Food Security Act. JAIARAM RAMESH Congress general secretary. came on a day when party president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and charged his advisors of misleading him about "things that are not written in our manifesto." "I would be more than happy to meet you person to person to explain our Nyaya Prastha so that as the Prime Minister you don't make statements that are false," Mr. Kharge said in his letter. "You and your government have turned away from the atrocities that the poor and backward women are facing in the country. Today, you talk about our motto, 'galsutra'. Isn't your government responsible for the atrocities against women in Manipur, atrocities against Dalit girls, gang rape of rapists?" asked the Congress chief, in a string rebuttal to Mr. Modi's charge that the Congress was trying to "take away wealth, including margasutras, from Hindu women and re-

distribute it among Muslims. "PM spreading lies" Mr. Ramesh also accused Modi of spreading "lies" to divert attention from real issues in the ongoing Lok Sabha election. He dared the PM to point out where in the party's manifesto the phrase "redistribution of wealth" had been mentioned. Rejecting Mr. Modi's allegation that the Congress would charge inheritance tax from people if it came to power, Mr. Ramesh said, "Prime Minister symbolises the Congress leadership. The Congress leader also asked the Prime Minister to clear his stand on the issue of conducting a caste census, and questioned why the government has not made public the entire dataset of the 2011 socio-economic caste census (SECC). "Caste is the basis of our reservation, we can't be running away from it... The data that we had collected about caste has not been published," Mr. Ramesh said. The Congress communications chief claimed that after reading the trends in power, Mr. Ramesh said, "The Congress has raised common issues as he wants the Congress on a different pitch.

Modi thanks Italian PM for invitation to G-7 meeting in June

Sabaasini/Italialar
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke on Thursday to Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, thanking her for an invitation to the G-7 summit in June, if he is re-elected.

The invitation for India to be a special invitee at the G-7 summit's outreach sessions, due to be held June 13-15, was received earlier this week, sources said.

Among the invitations New Delhi has received straight after election results are out in June are those for the Prime Minister or External Affairs Minister to attend the Ukraine peace conference to be held on June 15-16 in Lucerne, Switzerland, where G-7 leaders are expected to travel from Italy, as well as for the External Affairs Minister to travel to the Russian city of Nizhny Novgorod for the

BRICS Foreign Ministers meeting on June 10-11. However, both the Ministry of External Affairs and diplomatic sources said a final response on all three invitations could only be expected after the results are announced.

PM [Modi] extended his greetings to PM Meloni and the people of Italy on the occasion of the 79th anniversary of Liberation Day," a release by the PM's Office said.

[PM Modi] thanked PM Meloni for the invite to the G-7 summit outreach sessions to be held in June 2024 in Puglia, Italy," it added.

[Ms. Meloni and Mr. Modi] reaffirmed their commitment to continue to strengthen the bilateral strategic partnership. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and global developments of mutual interest," the press release on Thursday stated.

SC declines petition to end Collegium, revive NJAC

The plea, filed by advocate Mathews Nedumpara, says the present system leads to nepotism. SC Registrar says the issue is settled, and repeat litigation is a 'waste of judicial time and energy'

Krishnanadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Registry has rejected a petition to accept a system of judicial appointments and revive the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC), seeking to "prevent needless waste of judicial time and energy".

In a six-page order, Supreme Court Registrar Puneet Selgal said that the Collegium system had already been upheld, while the NJAC — which gave an equal role to the government in judicial appointments — had been struck down by a Constitution Bench in October 2015.

A review plea against the judgment was also subsequently dismissed by the court in 2018.

The petition filed by ad-



It is critical to ensure litigants do not overburden courts with matters which have already stand adjudicated. PUNEET SELGAL, Supreme Court Registrar

ocate Mathews Nedumpara only "replicated" issues which have already been put to rest, Mr. Selgal said. "It is critical to ensure litigants do not overburden courts with matters which already stand adjudicated," he observed in the order dated April 24.

Uterior motive A repeat litigation is not in the public's best interest, the order said, adding that the petition by Mr. Nedumpara was either an attempt to overreach the

principles of settled law or fuelled by an "uterior motive". The Registrar invoked the Supreme Court Rules, 2013 in his order against the petition. "I hold that the registration of the present case was not proper and by virtue of Order XVI, Rule 5 of the Supreme Court Rules, 2013, I hereby decline to entertain the same," the order declared.

Under this provision of the 2013 Rules, the Registrar may refuse to receive a petition on the ground that

it discloses no reasonable cause or is frivolous or contains scandalous matter. The petitioner has already filed two appeals to the court. "Synonym for nepotism" The petition was filed in 2022 amid verbal attacks against the Collegium system by the then Law Minister Kiren Rijiju. The plea argues that the Supreme Court, through its Constitution Bench judgment of October 2015, had thwarted the "will of the people" by striking down the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act which had introduced the NJAC mechanism.

The petition says that the 2015 judgment should be rendered void *ab initio* as it had revived the Collegium system, which the petitioners called a "synonym for nepotism and favouritism".

'Arrest of criminal politicians does not affect free elections'

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Faced with accusations about the intent and timing of the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal ahead of the Lok Sabha election, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) told the Supreme Court on Thursday that arresting politicians who are "criminals" is not a blow to free and fair elections.

The Anti Money Party (AAP) and the rest of the Opposition have accused the investigative agency of being a "political wing of the ruling BJP". The AAP said that the real intention behind the arrest of Mr. Kejriwal on March 21 was to prevent him from campaigning for the Lok Sabha election. Politicians who are criminals cannot enjoy immunity from arrest merely because they are required to campaign in the election, the ED said in an 87-page affidavit.

"Treating a politician differently from an ordinary criminal in a matter of arrest would amount to arbitrary and irrational exercise of power of arrest which would violate the principle of equality enshrined under Article 14 of the Constitution," the ED reasoned.

The Central agency said that the arrest of Mr. Kejriwal was based on material evidence which indicated that the Chief Minister was guilty of money laundering. The ED said that Mr. Kejriwal had avoided the investigation, disobeyed nine summons, and was totally non-cooperative. He either did not cooperate or had given evasive answers to simple, non-inflammatory questions during his interrogation on the day of the search, leading to his arrest, it mentioned.

On the draw



SC verdict today on transparency of EVMs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled on Friday to pronounce its judgment on petitions seeking a more transparent system of voting to ensure free and fair elections. The verdict coincides with the second phase of the Lok Sabha election.

Centre allows 'immediate' export of 2,000 tonnes of white onions

Yikas Dhot
NEW DELHI

In a surprise move, the Union government on Thursday partially relaxed the indefinite ban on onion exports again, paving the way for the export of 2,000 tonnes of white onions, primarily grown in Gujarat, from three designated ports. A notification issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said that exports of white onions would be permitted only after Gujarat's Horticulture Commissioner certifies the item and quantity being exported.

The relaxation is for white onions, primarily grown in Gujarat that goes to the polls on May 7.



Farmers arrive with fresh stock of white onion at a market in Mahuva, Gujarat. FILE PHOTO

While previous relaxations to the ban specified the countries where shipments could go and mandated that their votes have been accurately recorded. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, for the ADR, had suggested measures such as giving electors a copy of the VVPAT slips so that they could verify their accuracy before they are put in sealed ballot boxes. "The petitioners suggested more brightly lit screens for VVPATs to help voters clearly see their slips. They had also urged for a 100% cross-verification of the EVM vote count with the VVPAT paper slips.

neighbouring States such as Maharashtra who grow red onions. "Don't farmers outside Gujarat also deserve export opportunities now that [domestic] wholesale prices for red onions have cooled," asked a farmers' representative from Nashik.

Diplomatic exceptions A "step forward" Aji Shah, president of Horticulture Produce Exporters' Association (HPEA), said that permitting white onions' exports without specifying the destination country or agency through which they will be channelled is a step forward. "The same relaxations must be offered for red onions, as well as smaller size onions [40 mm or less] that are generally not consumed in local markets,"

he told The Hindu. While red onion prices in wholesale markets have dropped to about ₹11 to ₹12 per kg, white onion prices are around ₹18, he said. "It's now nearly six months since onion exports were banned. We have enough stocks, while prices are lower than when the government does permit additional exports. It must open them to all traders and farmers," he mooted.

On April 11, the CBI created a dedicated email ID (sandeshkhalighcbi.gov.in) for the public to send complaints against people allegedly involved in crimes against women and land grabbing in the Sandeshkhali region. The District Magistrate (North 24 Parganas), in an order dated April 10, had also been requested that the email ID be publicised in the local media. A notice be issued in the vernacular languages having wide circulation in the area. The High Court had ordered a district-monitored CBI investigation into alle-

Kallol Bhattacharjee

Australian authorities on Thursday acknowledged that India had granted visa to Avanti Dias, chief of bureau of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), though she had "chosen" to leave India by private means. She expressed satisfaction at the handling of the case by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Ms. Dias claimed last week that she had to leave India abruptly. She was told that her "visa extension would be denied". "The Australian government has been working with the Indian government and the ABC and Australia appreciates the MEA's assistance and cooperation. Australia is pleased that the Indian government granted a visa for the journalist though that time she had chosen to leave India. ABC covers our country regularly during the election period, is important to Australians with a bipartisan government," a source from the Australian High Commission here said in response to a question from The Hindu. The Australian version of the visa extension was issued by Ms. Dias was told nearly

CBI registers first FIR in Sandeshkhali violence case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



The CBI had created a dedicated email ID for the public to send complaints against people allegedly involved in the crime. The police have informed the Delhi High Court that they have not registered any case against one Jagdish Singh who referred to ANI News by founder Mohammed Zubair as 'jihadi' in a post on X in 2020.

In their status report, the Delhi Police said the probe by Mr. Singh did "cause fear or alarm" in the public and indicated any person to commit an offence against any state or against public inquiry was required in the interest of justice and fair play. The agency has also been asked to submit a detailed report on the exact date of hearing on May 2.

No case filed against man for terming Zubair a jihadi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The police have informed the Delhi High Court that they have not registered any case against one Jagdish Singh who referred to ANI News by founder Mohammed Zubair as 'jihadi' in a post on X in 2020. In their status report, the Delhi Police said the probe by Mr. Singh did "cause fear or alarm" in the public and indicated any person to commit an offence against any state or against public inquiry was required in the interest of justice and fair play. The agency has also been asked to submit a detailed report on the exact date of hearing on August 5.

ABC journalist left India in spite of visa approval: officials

Kallol Bhattacharjee



Satisfied with the External Ministry's handling of the Avanti Dias incident, Australian officials say they underscore the importance of ABC's India coverage

two weeks before she left India that her visa application had been processed and that the document would be delivered to her. They said that Ms. Dias did receive the visa but decided to leave India only two days before she left India. She had said that the Indian authorities were upset over her reporting on pro-Khalistan activists in Punjab and that she was told that her reporting had "crossed a line". It is understood that the Indian side was surprised by the accusations by Ms. Dias. The Indian sources added that following the

grant of visa, her requirements for covering the Indian election was also being looked into positively and that it could have been arranged despite previous disagreements over her coverage of Punjab.

Official sources had told The Hindu in West Delhi that Ms. Dias's "contention was not about the cover elections and was compelled to leave the country was not correct and misleading". Ms. Dias gained prominence after a report on the ABC on the "Chandan Das" was watched globally. Subsequently, the programme, "Silks hit on foreign soil", investigating India's alleged hit on foreign soil, was blocked by YouTube in India. In an email to the ABC on June 13, 2020, she received an order from the Ministry of Information and Public Relations. She did not report under the information Technology Act, 2008. A crew of the ABC had visited the Punjab farm home of Hardeep Singh Nijjar on March 25, 2020. It was then that she was told that she was slain by unknown assassins in Canada last year.

Centre allows 'immediate' export of 2,000 tonnes of white onions

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

In a surprise move, the Union government on Thursday partially relaxed the indefinite ban on onion exports again, paving the way for the "immediate" export of 2,000 tonnes of white onions, primarily grown in Gujarat, from three designated ports.

A notification issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said that exports of white onions would be permitted only after Gujarat's Horticulture Commissioner certifies the item and quantity being exported.

While previous relaxations to the ban specified the countries where shipments could go and mandated that such exports be channelled through the National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL), the latest notification sets no such conditions. It only stipulates that the exports must be routed through the Gujarati ports of Mundra and Pipavav, or Nhava Sheva in Mumbai.

Gujarat crop

Incidentally, horticulture exporters are learnt to have written to the Commerce Ministry and the DGFT on April 13 to ascer-



Farmers arrive with fresh stock of white onion at a market in Mahuva, Gujarat. FILE PHOTO

The relaxation is for white onions, primarily grown in Gujarat that goes to the polls on May 7

tain if any relaxation is in the offing for white onion exports, citing reports of ongoing procurement of export quality white onions at one of Gujarat's Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs).

Gujarat is the predominant producer and exporter of white onions in the country, with districts like Bhavnagar and Amreli – which go to the polls on May 7 – accounting for a large part of the produce.

The latest relaxation has triggered some disquiet among onion farmers from

neighbouring States such as Maharashtra who grow red onions. "Don't farmers outside Gujarat also deserve export opportunities now that [domestic] wholesale prices for red onions have cooled," asked a farmers' representative from Nashik.

'A step forward'

Ajit Shah, president of Horticulture Produce Exporters' Association (HPEA), said that permitting white onions' exports without specifying the destination country or agency through which they will be channelled is a step forward. "The same relaxations must be offered for red onions, as well as smaller size onions [40 mm or less] that are generally not consumed in local markets,"

he told *The Hindu*.

While red onion prices in wholesale markets have dropped to about ₹11 to ₹12 per kg, white onion prices are around ₹16 to ₹17, he said. "It's now nearly six months since onion exports were banned and we have enough stocks, while prices are lower. So, as and when the government does permit additional exports, it must open them to all traders and farmers," he mooted.

Diplomatic exceptions

Fearing a shortage of the politically sensitive crop, the Union government had banned onion exports in December 2023. Last month, the curbs were extended 'till further orders'. However, it had kept the window open for exports to countries making requests through diplomatic channels.

On March 1, 14,400 metric tonnes (MT) of onion exports were permitted for the United Arab Emirates, with a quarterly cap of 3,600 MT. Through two more notifications this month, an additional 20,000 MT of onions have been approved for the UAE "over and above" the quarterly quota, and 10,000 MT have been permitted for Sri Lanka.

INDIA'S SHARE IN WORLD ONION PRODUCTION

2017



2023 (projection)



Annual Onion production of 2018-19

(as per 3rd advance estimate)

23.5 million tonnes

(up by 1% over previous year)

Estimated annual onion consumption
of India including exports

16 million tonnes

Onion exports in 2018:











₹ 3,516 cr (1.99 million tonnes)

Onion exports from January to June 2019:

₹ 1,840 cr (1.24 million tonnes)

STATE-WISE ONION PRODUCTION

Production in '000 tonnes

	2019-20 (1st Ad. Est.)	Share (%)	
Maharashtra	9,099.0	37.2	
Madhya Pradesh	3,966.0	16.2	
Karnataka	2,275.0	9.3	
Rajasthan	1,386.0	5.7	
Bihar	1,312.9	5.4	
Gujarat	1,256.8	5.1	
Andhra Pradesh	935.0	3.8	
Haryana	905.3	3.7	
West Bengal	670.0	2.7	
Uttar Pradesh	444.6	1.8	



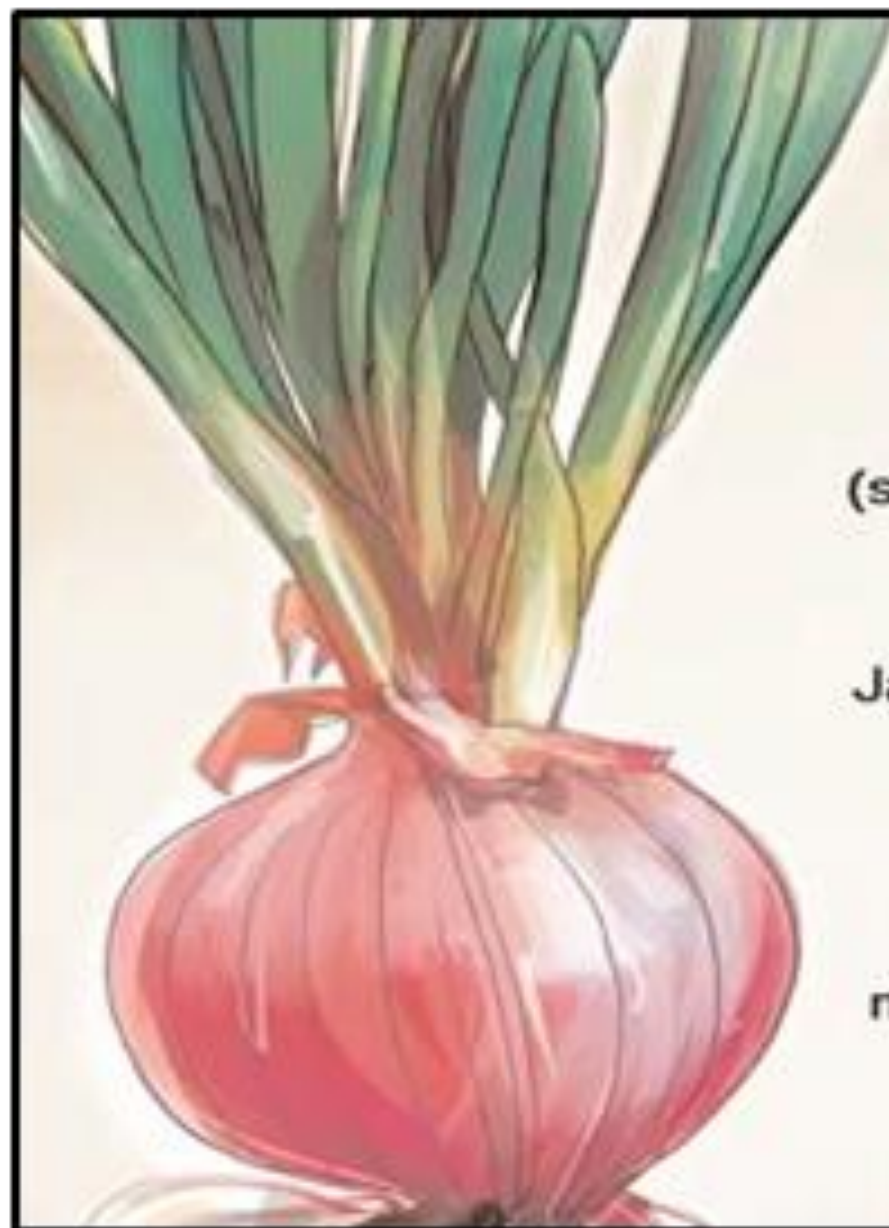
Source: NHB; compiled by BSResearch Bureau

TOP ONION PRODUCING STATES IN INDIA



- MAHARASHTRA
- KARNATAKA
- GUJARAT
- M.P
- ANDHRA PRADESH
- BIHAR





There are three main harvest seasons for onions in India:

KHARIF (sowed in June~July, harvested after October)

LATE KHARIF
(sowed in September, harvested after December)

RABI (sowed in December~January, harvested after March)

- The rabi crop retains less moisture and is easier to store. Farmers supply this harvest to markets till new produce arrives

Yearly consumption in India is around **160 lakh tonnes**

IN BRIEF

Swiggy secures investors' approval for ₹10,414-crore IPO

Food and grocery delivery major Swiggy has secured shareholders' nod to raise ₹10,414 crore through issue of fresh equity shares and an offer for sale (OFS), according to sources. A special resolution was passed at an extraordinary general meeting of Swiggy on April 23, they said. According to sources, the Bengaluru-based firm plans to raise up to ₹7,750 crore through fresh equity shares, in addition to an OFS component of up to ₹2,664 crore.

Coromandel International names Adagappan Chairman

Coromandel International Ltd. (CIL) has appointed and re-designated Executive Vice Chairman Arun Adagappan as Executive Chairman on the retirement of Chairman and Non-Executive Director A. Vellayan who was named Chairman Emeritus. Meanwhile, CIL's net profit for the quarter ended March 31, slid 20% YoY to ₹209 crore. Total income contracted 27% to ₹4,527 crore. The board recommended a final dividend of ₹6 per equity share for FY24.

IndiGo 'agrees' to buy 30 Airbus widebody aircraft

Paving the way for non-stop, long-haul international flights, budget carrier IndiGo said it had 'agreed' to order 30 Airbus A350-900 widebody aircraft. The planes are expected to be delivered from 2027. In addition, the budget carrier said in a press statement it also had purchase rights for an additional 70 Airbus A350 family aircraft 'for possible future needs under certain conditions'. The airline has almost 350 aircraft in its fleet.

Happiest Minds to buy PureSoftware for ₹779 crore

The Hindu Bureau

Tech veteran Ashok Soota-promoted Happiest Minds Technologies on Thursday said it signed definitive agreements to acquire 100% of the equity share capital of Noida-based PureSoftware Technologies Private Ltd. for a total purchase consideration of \$94.5 million (₹779 crore). This would include upfront payment of ₹635 crore on deal closure and a deferred payment of ₹14 crore payable at the end of FY25 on achievement of set performance targets, the firm said in a filing. PureSoftware logged ₹43 million in FY24 revenue.

'Emphasise domestic patents, subsidy for semiconductor'

Aaron Deen

NEW DELHI

Semiconductor design initiatives must be encouraged with improved local fundraising opportunities and incentives for using domestically registered intellectual property (IP), the India Cellular & Electronics Association (ICEA) said in a report Thursday. As China's semiconductor industry faces strong government support, India must seize the opportunity to attract investors due to geopolitical tensions, ICEA said. Capacity building for semiconductor is important, said Mr. Mohindroo, who has highlighted the need for research, development, and investment in the semiconductor supply chain. China has 'over-invested' in low-tech chips, crashing global prices, and investment appetite for research, while opening up initiatives that make access to funding easy with early exits for investors.

'Global recovery offers growth upside; food prices to cool'

March spike in world oil, food prices warrant attention, but concerns from geopolitical tensions seen easing, ministry says in economic review

Vikas Dhoot

NEW DELHI

The global economy is on the mend with major economies seeing a growth rebound that augurs well for India's economy. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in the annual Economic Survey 2023-24, released on Thursday. She said above-normal monsoon projection for the year bodes well for a good harvest. Flaring increasing occurrence of weather shocks as posing an upside risk to food prices.

Upbeat assessment

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Rural demand pickup, robust investment, sustained manufacturing momentum underpinning economic performance'

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Kotak plunges on RBI order; CEO reassures

Reuters

MUMBAI

Kotak Mahindra Bank's shares plunged on Thursday, a day after the RBI barred India's fourth-biggest private bank by assets from taking on new clients digitally and issuing credit cards, a blow to a lender that relies heavily on online banking.

The Reserve Bank took action after Kotak's tech system failed to manage a surge in transactions when large numbers of customers signed up through its digital banking platform. Kotak's CEO Ashok Vaswani sought to allay employee concerns, writing in an email, seen through Reuters, 'we will emerge stronger' and the issue would be resolved 'in short order'.



Kotak fell 10.9% to ₹1,643 on the BSE after sliding 13% intraday to the low since November 2020. Kotak CEO Ashok Vaswani sought to allay employee concerns, writing in an email, seen through Reuters, 'we will emerge stronger' and the issue would be resolved 'in short order'.

FPO marks start of Vodafone Idea 2.0'

The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

Vodafone Idea Ltd.'s successful fundraising of ₹18,000 crore through its follow-on public offer (FPO) would enable the company to stage a turnaround, Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla said on Thursday.

Mr. Birla asserted that the successful conclusion of 'India's largest FPO' had been shaped 'significantly' by the governments reform package. 'The policy environment today encourages investment, innovation, and competition. India's digital economy is booming, and robust telecom networks are crucial to support this growth. A network of 1.4 billion people deserves three-star quality telecom services,' he said. 'The Union government owns 33% in VIL, which is part of Aditya Birla Group.'

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

Table with 3 columns: Index, % Change, and Value. Includes S&P 500, Nikkei 225, DAX, FTSE 100, and Hang Seng.

NIIFT 50

Table with 3 columns: Stock Name, Price, and Change. Lists various Indian stocks like Adani Enterprises, Apollo Hospitals, and Tata Motors.

EXCHANGE RATES

Table with 3 columns: Currency, Rate, and Change. Lists exchange rates for USD, EUR, GBP, etc.

Hyundai, Kia aim at 1.5-mn cars in output

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

Hyundai Motor Group (HMG) announced its mid-to long-term strategies to respond to the Indian automotive market and to solidify its position as a leading mobility company. Addressing the first overseas town hall meeting, HMG Executive Chair Euisun Chung shared the group's vision for the Indian market with HMIIL employees in New Delhi on April 23. As per plans, HMIIL and Kia India are planning to produce 1.5 million vehicles annually in India. Besides, it is also planning to strengthen its electric vehicle leadership through its electrification strategy.

HC orders review of Tata Motor's ALL patent challenge

Mohamed Inuranullah S.

CHENNAI

The Madras High Court has ordered reconstitution of the Opposition Board in a challenge by Tata Motors Ltd. (TML) to a patent held by Ashok Leyland Ltd. (ALL) for a product titled 'Multi-Axle Vehicle Configuration Having Heavy Duty Lift Axle' since 2016.

vindarajan Thilakavadi set aside a single judge's order dismissing ALL's writ petition (WP) and directed the Controller of Patents and Designs in Chennai to reconstitute the Opposition Board in a fortnight. Disposing of the WP filed by ALL, the Bench ordered that the Opposition Board conduct a fresh application of the documents and evidence of both sides before submitting its recommendation to the Controller by May 22.

CPCL Q4 net dips on low price, forex loss

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

Chemical Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (CPCL) reported standalone net profit for the quarter ended March 31 fell 39% year-on-year to ₹12.48/bbl in the quarter, down from ₹17.73/bbl in the previous year. The decline was mainly due to lower product cracker margins and foreign exchange loss. Revenue from operations slid to ₹20,823 crore, from ₹21,350 crore, on account of lower refinery

transfer price realisation, the oil refiner said in a statement.

'Low product cracker's gross refining margin (GRM) was ₹77.73/bbl against \$12.48/bbl in the quarter-earlier period. The decline was mainly due to lower product cracker margins in the international market. CPCL said. Industry benchmark Singapore GRM stood at \$6.60/bbl.

Intellectual property: India features yet again on U.S.' 'priority watch list'

Amit Sen

NEW DELHI

The U.S. has once again included India in the 'priority watch list' of countries, along with China, Russia, Venezuela, and three others, for alleged problems related to IP protection, and enforcement, and has said there will be particularly intense bilateral engagement on the matter during the coming year. 'There has been progress under the U.S.-India Trade Policy Forum in addressing issues of trademark infringement, counterfeiting, and pre-grant opposition proceedings, but numerous long-standing concerns remain, per the U.S. Trade Representative's 2024 Special 301 report released on Thursday.



Under the radar: India has been on the 'priority watch' list of countries for many years, Reuters

protect trade secrets,' it said. Among other things, India still needs to fully implement the WIPO Internet Treaties and ensure that copyright statutory licensing investigations and enforcement measures are serious problems exist in the country concerning IP protection, enforcement, or market access for Americans relying on IP. India's stance on intellectual property laws IP protection and enforcement regimes in various countries it trades with. India has been on the 'priority watch' list of

'In FY25, IT firms 'will be back' at campuses'

Haripriya Sureshan

BENGALURU

The IT sector, after a full fiscal year of low-to-no further and entry-level hiring, will see a return to the campus in FY25, HR analysts said. As deal pipeline swells, attrition drops and utilisation levels peak amid a tough demand environment, fresher hiring can be an effective cost-play for IT firms, they added. The IT sector collectively net added 70,000 entry-level talents in FY24, the lowest intake over a two-decade period. On a low reference base, the year ahead could well see 100% y-o-y growth, even if fresher intake hits the moderate 1.5 lakh mark, staffing firm Apherio's analysis notes. Even as the revenue growth for the sector was muted, the commentary on hiring was positive. (The writer is with The Hindu Businessline)

Intellectual property: India features yet again on U.S. 'priority watch list'

Amiti Sen
NEW DELHI

The U.S. has once again included India in the 'priority watch list' of countries, along with China, Russia, Venezuela, and three others, for alleged problems related to IP protection and enforcement, and has said there will be particularly intense bilateral engagement on the matter during the coming year.

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'High online piracy'

"These include inadequate IP enforcement, including high rates of online piracy, an extensive trademark opposition backlog, and insufficient legal means to



Under the radar: India has been on the 'priority watch' list of countries for many years. REUTERS

protect trade secrets," it said.

Among other things, India still needs to fully implement the WIPO Internet Treaties and ensure that copyright statutory licences do not extend to interactive transmissions," the report added.

The USTR releases the Special 301 Report annually, highlighting the state of IP protection and enforcement regimes in various countries it trades with.

India has been on the 'priority watch' list of

countries for many years, which, according to the USTR office, indicates that serious problems exist in the country concerning IP protection, enforcement, or market access for Americans relying on IP.

India's stance

New Delhi, however, has always maintained that its intellectual property laws were in strict adherence to the WTO's Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement and that it was not bound

by any global rules to make changes in its laws.

No action is threatened by the U.S. against countries on the 'priority watch list', but if a country slips further and is categorised a 'priority country', Washington may impose 'retaliatory' measures. Indonesia, Chile, and Argentina are the other countries on the 'priority watch list'.

Other trading partners

Twenty trading partners are on the 'watch list', including countries that the U.S. believes merit bilateral attention to address underlying IP problems but are better than the 'priority watch list' countries.

Algeria, Barbados, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Mexico, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, and Vietnam are on the 'watch list'.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

World Intellectual Property Organization



Abbreviation	WIPO
Formation	14 July 1967; 56 years ago
Type	United Nations specialised agency
Legal status	Active
Headquarters	Geneva , Switzerland
Membership	193 member states
Head	Daren Tang Director General
Parent organization	United Nations Economic and Social Council

BEIRUT

Hezbollah denies Israel claim it killed half of commanders in south



Hezbollah denied on Thursday an Israeli claim that it had killed half of the Iran-backed Lebanese group's commanders in the south of the country, saying only a handful were slain. A Hezbollah source who spoke on condition of anonymity rejected the claim of Israel Defense Minister Yoav Gallant who had made the remarks. AFP

French police break up pro-Palestine varsity protest

Agence France-Presse PARIS

The French police broke up a pro-Palestinian protest by dozens of university students in Paris, officials said on Thursday, as Israel's bombardment of Gaza sparks a wave of anger across college campuses in the United States.

The police intervened as dozens of students gathered on a central Paris campus of the prestigious Sciences Po university on Wednesday evening.

"After discussions with management, most of them agreed to leave the premises," university officials said in a statement, saying the protest was adding to "tensions" at the university. "A small group of students" refused to leave and "it was decided that the police would evacuate the site," the statement added.

Bangladesh sends back Myanmar troops who fled border clashes

Agence France-Presse COX'S BAZAR

Bangladesh sent home nearly 300 Myanmar troops and civil servants on Thursday who fled across the border to escape attacks on their outposts near the frontier between the two countries. Myanmar has been rolled in conflict since the military seized power from a democratically elected government in a 2021 coup.

Violent clashes between soldiers of the Arakan Army, an armed group belonging to an ethnic minority, and junta forces since late last year saw hundreds of fleeing troops cross into Bangladesh.

Government officials said that a Myanmar-flagged ship carrying soldiers, police and civil servants departed from the river port of Naniarchar on Thursday.

288 troops

All 288 troops, which mostly include Myanmar's Border Guard Police and some Army soldiers, were escorted back to their country at Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. AFP



NEW YORK

New York court overturns Harvey Weinstein's sex crime conviction



New York's highest court overturned Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein's 2020 conviction on sex crime charges, a shock reversal in one of the defining cases of the #MeToo movement. The court cited errors in the way the trial was conducted, including admitting the testimony of women who were not part of the charges. AFP

KUALA LUMPUR

Former Malaysia PM Mahathir Mohamad faces anti-graft probe



Malaysia's former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is being probed in a graft investigation involving his two sons, the country's anti-corruption body said on Thursday. Mahathir, 88, is a political rival and fierce critic of Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who came to power in 2022 vowing to stamp out high-level corruption. AFP

YEREVAN

Protests erupt across Armenia against land transfer to Azerbaijan



Dozens of Armenians protested on Thursday, including in the capital Yerevan, angry at what they see as territorial concessions to Azerbaijan. The latest flare-up comes after the two countries began physical demarcation of a contested border section in a bid to move closer to an elusive peace deal after three decades of conflict. AFP

100 arrested in pro-Palestine protests at U.S. universities

93 persons held at the University of Southern California, while 34 at the University of Texas; demonstrations are only the latest in a string of protests which began at the Columbia University

Agence France-Presse LOS ANGELES

More than 100 people were arrested on Wednesday at two universities in California and Texas, officials said, after pro-Palestinian protests erupted across U.S. campuses this week.

Demonstrations flared at the University of Southern California (USC) Los Angeles campus, where 93 "After discussions with management, most of them agreed to leave the premises," university officials said in a statement, saying the protest was adding to "tensions" at the university.

"A small group of students" refused to leave and "it was decided that the police would evacuate the site," the statement added.



Noble causes A demonstrator holds a sign after at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles on Wednesday. REUTERS

rael's war against Palestinian militant group Hamas and patrols would remain in the area on Thursday.

USC said on social media site X at around midnight that the protest had ended and the campus would remain "closed until further notice." The LAPD said there were no reports of injuries

protest encampment that some Jewish students said was "threatening and anti-Semitic." Demonstrators, including a number of Jewish students, have disavowed instances of anti-Semitism and criticized officials equating it with opposition to Israel.

As students and other demonstrators have camped out on school quads, occupied university buildings and disrupted campus activities, universities this week have affirmed their rights to free speech and peaceful protest.

But pro-Israel supporters and others worried about campus safety have also pointed to anti-Semitic incidents and alleged that campuses are encouraging intimidation and hate speech.

'Hamas will lay down arms if Palestine state is established'

Associated Press ISTANBUL

A top Hamas political official told The Associated Press the Islamic militant group is willing to agree to a truce of five years or more with Israel and that it would lay down its weapons and convert into a political party if an independent Palestinian state is established along pre-1967 borders.

The comments by Khalil al-Hayya in an interview on Wednesday came amid a stalemate in months of talks for a ceasefire in Gaza. Analysts suggest that Hamas would disarm and appear to be a significant concession by the militant group officially committed to the group's destruction.

But it's unlikely Israel would consider such a scenario. It has vowed to crush Hamas following the October 7 attacks that triggered the war, and its current leadership is adamantly opposed to the



Khalil al-Hayya

creation of a Palestinian state on lands Israel captured in the 1967 West Asian war.

Al-Hayya, a high-ranking Hamas official who has represented the Palestinian militants in negotiations for a cease-fire and hostage exchange, struck a sometimes defiant and other times conciliatory tone.

Joining PLO The issue to the AP in Istanbul, Al-Hayya said Hamas and its treatment in the Palestine Liberation Organization, headed by the rival Fatah faction, to form a unified

government for Gaza and the West Bank. He said Hamas would accept "a fully sovereign Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the return of Palestinian refugees in accordance with the international resolutions," along Israel's pre-1967 borders.

If that happens, he said, the group's military wing would dissolve. "All the experiences of people who fought against occupiers, when they became independent and obtained their rights and their state, what have these forces done? They have turned into political parties and their defending fighting forces have turned into the national army," he said.

Al-Hayya did not say whether his apparent embrace of a two-state solution would amount to an end to the Palestinian conflict with Israel or an interim step toward the group's stated goal of destroying Israel.

Money row



People protest on Thursday against the introduction of the registration and tourist fee to visit the city of Venice for day trippers. The move by Venice municipality is aimed at preserving the lagoon city often crammed with tourists. REUTERS

Heatstroke kills 30 in Thailand this year as Southeast Asia swelters in hot weather

Agence France-Presse BANGKOK

Millions of people across South and Southeast Asia sweltered through unusually hot weather on Thursday, as the Thai government said heatstroke has already killed at least 30 people this year.

A wave of exceptionally hot weather has blasted the region this week, prompting thousands of schools across the Philippines to suspend in-person classes.

The Indian Meteorological Department said severe heatwave conditions were expected in nine eastern and southern states in the coming days.



No respite: Motorcyclists wait under the shade as a woman crosses a traffic intersection in Bangkok on Thursday. AP

Even mountainous Nepal issued health warnings and put hospitals on alert on Thursday as temperatures soared in its southern plains. Scientific research has shown climate change is causing heatwaves to be longer, more frequent and more intense.

The United Nations said this week Asia was the region most affected by climate and weather hazards in 2023.

City authorities in Bangkok gave an extreme heat warning as the heat index was expected to rise above 52°C.

The Health Ministry in Thailand said that 30 people had died from heatstroke between January 1 and April 17, compared with 37 in the whole of 2023.

U.S. and China should manage differences responsibly: Blinken

Agence France-Presse BEIJING

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on Thursday for the United States and China to manage their differences "responsibly" as he landed in Beijing for tough talks with the rival power's leaders.

Mr. Blinken is expected to address a range of thorny issues, including Chinese support for Russia and its treatment of Taiwan, with China likely to raise trade concerns such as new U.S. action against popular social media app TikTok.

Mr. Blinken headed straight to a closed-door gathering with leading Chinese scholars on Thursday. On Friday, a full day of talks with China's political leadership is planned, including a possible meeting with President Xi Jinping.

Mr. Blinken arrived from Shanghai, where the top U.S. diplomat attempted a show of goodwill that saw him sample local food, watch a basketball game and stroll along the city's famous Bund promenade.

Visiting the local Communist Party leader in a room with sweeping views of the Shanghai skyline, Mr. Blinken said U.S. President Joe Biden was committed to "direct and sustained" dialogue between the world's two largest economies after years of mounting tension.

"I think it's important to underscore the value — in fact, the necessity — of direct engagement, of speaking to each other, laying



Antony Blinken

out our differences, which are real, seeking to work through them," Mr. Blinken said.

"We have an obligation for our people — indeed an obligation to the world — to manage the relationship between our two countries responsibly."

The Chinese Communist Party secretary for Shanghai, Chen Jining, welcomed Mr. Blinken partly in English and spoke of the importance of US businesses to the city.

"Whether we choose cooperation or confrontation affects the well-being of both peoples, both countries and the future of humanity," Mr. Chen told him.

Mr. Blinken also met students at the Shanghai campus of New York University, where he voiced hope for more Americans to study in China.

He insisted the U.S. was committed to welcoming Chinese students.

Beijing has repeatedly alleged that Chinese nationals with valid travel documents, including students, have been subject to aggressive interrogations and deportations at U.S. airports.

Money row



People protest on Thursday against the introduction of the registration and tourist fee to visit the city of Venice for day trippers. The move by Venice municipality is aimed at preserving the lagoon city often crammed with tourists. REUTERS



Grand Canal



Bridge of Sighs

Ca' Foscari

Salute



St Mark's Campanile

Doge's Palace



Flag



Coat of arms

Location of Venice

[\[show\]](#)



Country	Italy
Region	Veneto
Metropolitan city	Venice (VE)
Frazioni	Chirignago, Favaro Veneto, Mestre, Marghera, Murano, Burano, Giudecca, Lido, Zelarino
Government	
• Mayor	Luigi Brugnaro (CI)
Area ^[1]	
• Total	414.57 km ² (160.07 sq mi)
Elevation	1 m (3 ft)
Population (2020) ^[2]	
• Total	258,685
• Density	620/km ² (1,600/sq mi)
Demonym(s)	Veneziano Venetian (English)
Time zone	UTC+1 (CET)
• Summer (DST)	UTC+2 (CEST)
Postal code	30100
Dialing code	041
ISTAT code	027042 ↗
Patron saint	St. Mark the Evangelist
Saint day	25 April
Website	Official website ↗



IN BRIEF



Six killed in fire at Patna hotel; 45 rescued from the building

Six people, three of them women, were killed and 49 injured in a fire at a hotel in Patna on Thursday. Forty-five people were rescued from the burning Hotel located in the Korwala police station area. The injured were admitted to the Patna Medical College and Hospital, where the condition of two is said to be critical. The police are trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased. “Gas cylinder catching fire is said to be the reason for the incident. However, investigation is under way to ascertain the cause of the fire,” Chandra Prakash, Superintendent of Police (Patna Central), said. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar expressed deep grief over the incident.

2 Naxalites killed in gunfire with security forces in Odisha

Two Naxalites were found dead following an exchange of fire between the outlawed CPI (Maoist) and the security forces in Parbel Reserve Forest under Kantamal police station of Odisha's Boudha district early on Thursday. According to the police, the Naxalites launched indiscriminate fire on personnel of Special Operation Group, a special anti-naxal force of Odisha, when they were on patrolling the area upon being tipped off about the presence of Naxals. “As of now, we have spotted two Naxalites and their attack operation has been launched,” said Suresh Dev Datta Singh, Additional Director-General of Police (Operations). Grenades and other articles were recovered from the area, he said. Odisha has recorded 154 incidents of Naxal violence between 2019 and 2023.

New test for special learning disabilities in adults on anvil

Abhina Burtani
Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

The Union government is expected to roll out a new test to diagnose specific learning disabilities (SLDs) in adults in India by the end of the year, government officials have said, adding that the test is being designed by the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (NIEPID) in Telangana's Secunderabad. “This comes even as the Supreme Court is in the middle of hearing a writ petition by a former Jawaharlu Nehru University student challenging the absence of such diagnostic methods for testing SLDs in adults, which prevented them from getting disability certificates.

Getting a certificate is imperative in order to claim benefits under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016, which provides for reservation in government or higher education institutions receiving government jobs (8%), and in government jobs (4%).

Senior officials in the Union Social Justice Ministry said that the new test is being developed by NIEPID and should be ready for a phased rollout by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

TH CROSSWORD 14159
(Set by Hyppatia)

- Across**
1 Instructions to cook recipe mixed with *maida* essentially (6)
4 Group looked around ruins (6)
9 Grows older when leaves shed softly (4)
10 Spoke about old city next to river that's enclosed (10)

After missing CAA cut-off, many Pakistani Hindus in Rajasthan stare at a bleak future

Around 75% of citizenship applications in the State have been pending since 2019, says an activist working for their welfare; besides that, basic facilities such as proper roads, sewerage lines, and clean drinking water too are a distant dream for them while also facing social stigma

Ishita Mishra
BARMER

Amid the euphoria around the Citizenship (Amendment) Act during the Lok Sabha election, those who came for shelter after December 31, 2014, the cut-off date under the new law, face a difficult path to citizenship. They have to apply under the primary Citizenship Act, 1955, which has in the past made applicants wait for years.

The Pakistani Hindu families that have migrated to Barmer — bordering Pakistan — years ago feel that the CAA is of no use until their living conditions are uplifted. Many of them, even after becoming Indian citizens, continue to live in poor conditions and face social stigma. Hare Singh Lodha, 55, came to India with nine family members from Pakistan's Sindh in 2017. He is living in a rented accommodation in Barmer's Daan Ji Ki Hodi locality, where over 800 Pakistani Hindu families live. Mr. Lodha cannot apply for the CAA and he does not want to go back to Pakistan where his life is in “dANGER”. But even living in India did not turn out to be as “expected”.



Seeking solace: The families that migrated to Barmer — bordering Pakistan — years ago feel that the CAA is of no use. FILE PHOTO

“I had applied for citizenship under the 1955 Act, but when the police came for verification for my credentials at my brother's place, they didn't wait for 10 minutes for my brother to call me, and left. I got to know that a negative report was filed for my citizenship application,” he says, adding that he has no idea how long it will take for him to get citizenship.

Mr. Singh's 20-year-old son had completed his school from India and even managed to crack the medical entrance exam but he could not secure admission in a government medical college as he had no domicile certificate and local identity proof. “They expect me to get

jobs in India to survive. It's not just that our present is bad but we don't have much hopes of a future too. For how long will I work for my son or grandson to become at least a middle-class citizen of India,” says Darbar Singh, who came to India in 2017.

Teething issues Ram Singh Lodha, who came to India in 2006, secured Indian citizenship under the CAA but is waiting for the same for his mother who migrated here in 2019.

“Why can't they relax some rules for people whose family members are already Indian,” he asks the government.

The claims made by successive governments at the Centre for uplifting persecuted communities are more in words and not in action, says Hindu Singh Sodha, president of Sheemant Lok Sangathan (SL5), an organisation working for the welfare of families of Hindu migrants displaced from Pakistan.

“There are 35,000 non-resident Indians — mostly Pakistani Hindus — living in Rajasthan's Barmer, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Jalore, and Jaipur. Around 75% of citizenship applications here are pending since 2019. In

most cases, these Hindus live in ghettos or for those who can afford, in rented accommodations. No government has provided any land to them apart from the development of Vinodha Bhawan Nagar in Jodhpur, but the reserve price is so high that very few can afford to purchase them,” he says.

Criticising the visa renewal procedure of the Union Home Ministry, Mr. Sodha said the Indian government was not even realising that a family that was already struggling to earn was giving so much to Pakistan in the form of passport renewal and re-nunciation of Pakistani citizenship fees.

Integrated policy “The government must prepare an integrated policy for rehabilitation, employment, education and health care of such people,” he said.

Janjar Singh Lodha, who got Indian citizenship long ago, has a wish from the government which is to restart the Thrax Express — an international passenger train that used to run between Jodhpur in Rajasthan and Karachi in the Pakistani province of Sindh, which was suspended in 2019.

CJI unhappy over some HCs hesitating about online links

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud on Thursday revealed that some High Courts still considered video conferencing an indulgence and not a step forward by modern judiciary to provide access to justice for all.

“Some High Courts want an advance notice of 48 hours for providing video conferencing links [to lawyers and litigants]. Some have said you can get a VC link only if you are above the age of 60. ‘The links should be in the cause list. Why should anyone be made to apply two days in advance or be above the age of 60 for video conferencing links?’ Chief Justice Chandrachud

Do resources of individuals belong to community, asks SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

A nine-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Bench to decide whether all material resources created by individual human labour constitute the resources of the community.

The Bench is hearing a reference on the contours of Article 20(9) of the Constitution, including whether privately-owned resource can be considered as “material resource of the community”. The Article provided that the state should direct policy in such a way that the ownership and control of material resources of the community were distributed to best advantage of the common good.

He said the money was part of the ₹7,000 crore allocated to the judiciary for the third phase of its courts project. The CJ said virtual hearings and video conferencing (VC) would help solve chronic delays plaguing criminal trials.



Justice Hrishikesh Roy, on the Bench, reacted by observing that it was difficult to imagine that whatever human resource produced was the resource of the community.

FAITH

Focus on 'Brahman'

At times, there may be a discussion about whether people are born as a result of their past deeds or, after being born, they undertake various deeds. It is like ‘*Bhujantura Nyaya*’. *Bhija* refers to seeds and *ankura* means sprouts. It cannot be said whether sprouts came from seeds first or vice-versa.

Valayappattai Sri Ramacharitar said in a discourse that a person whose mind is steadfastly set on the realisation of self and undeluded by the body consciousness would neither rejoice the pleasure nor grieve the grief. He whose mind is engaged in the contemplation of ‘Brahman’ will enjoy undecaying bliss.

For those pleasures that are born of contact are womb of pain. Five blemishes (*doshas*) may emerge in the process of enjoyment through worldly contacts: *Arjanya dosha* — people undergo untold suffering to earn money; *Rakshana dosha* — encounter with various difficulties to protect and save the hard-earned money; *Kshaya dosha* the wealth earned is not permanent and is perishable or destructible.

People may constantly fear their wealth will go off them. *Bhoga dosha*, the more we experience material comforts, the more the urge and desire grow in us. It is like offering oblations in fire, which kindle the flames to leap high. If people do not get the desired comforts, they end up regretting. *Himsa dosha* — refers to constraints applicable to others while we try to obtain the means to enjoy our comforts. The wise men do not rejoice in them.

SUDOKU

2 3 1 3 8
6 3 1 3 2 6 1 6 8
6 4 3 3 4 8 8 8
5 9 5 6 9 4
3 9 9 6 5 5
5 1 2 9 6 7

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

Do resources of individuals belong to community, asks SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

A nine-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Union government whether all material resources created by individual human labour constitute the resources of the community.

The Bench is hearing a reference on the contours of Article 39(b) of the Constitution, including whether privately-owned resources could be considered as “material resources of the community”. The Article provided that the state should direct policy in such a way that the ownership and control of material resources of the community were distributed to best subserve the common good.

Attorney General (AG)



R. Venkataramani, appearing for the Union of India, submitted that “all things in the material world which are available and made available by human interaction or engagement constitute the material resources of the community”.

“Once resources are in the hands of the state, no further questions about ownership and control issues will make sense,” the AG said.

This prompted Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, heading the Con-

stitution Bench, to ask the AG if he was suggesting that “everything created by the application of private labour was the material resource of the community”.

“So I build a house using my own income, is it the material resource of the community? I own a car, is it the material resource of the community? Is there no concept of private property,” Chief Justice Chandrachud queried.

Mr. Venkataramani responded that “if it goes beyond the boundary of private consumption, there is an element of the community having a call on the resource”.

Justice Hrishikesh Roy, on the Bench, reacted by observing that it was difficult to imagine that whatever human resource produced was the resource of the community.

500 leaders attend Global Spirituality Mahotsav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

THE MINISTRY of Culture in association with the non-profit organisation Heartfulness recently hosted a four-day Global Spirituality Mahotsav at Kanha Shanti Vanam near Hyderabad.

The spirituality summit, held from March 14 to 17, hosted 500 of the most prominent heads of spiritual organisations from all faiths and schools of belief from around the world. With "Inner Peace to World Peace" as its theme, the spiritual congregation was attended by close to 1,00,000 people. It was aimed at promoting interfaith dialogues and helping people of all ages and walks of life to connect with spirituality in their daily lives.

In her speech, President Droupadi Murmu, who inaugurated the meet, said the Global

Spirituality Mahotsav will take humanity towards spirituality. "Today, great spiritual leaders and lakhs of people have joined together to bring harmony, irrespective of different belief systems. I congratulate Rev Daaji (Guide of Heartfulness & President of Shri Ram Chandra Mission) for taking the Heartfulness movement to 160 countries across the world," Murmu said.

Key participants at the summit included Shri Chinna Jeeyar Swami, Shri Vaisnavism Guru; motivational speaker Gaur Gopal Das; Mark Milton of Education4Peace; Pir Zia Inayat Khan of the Inayati Order; Harjinder Singh Dhani of SGPC; Rev. Anthony Poola, Archbishop of Hyderabad; Dr Jayanti S. Ravi of the Auroville Foundation; Ven Geshe Dorji of the Tibet House; actor Kabir Bedi; and filmmaker Shekhar Kapur.

IT IS PLOWING MONEY INTO GLITZY EVENTS, COMPUTING POWER AND AI RESEARCH, PUTTING IT IN MIDDLE OF US-CHINA STRUGGLE

‘To the future’: Saudi Arabia spends big to become AI superpower

ADAM SATARIANO
& PAUL MOZUR
RIYADH, APRIL 25

ON A Monday morning last month, tech executives, engineers and sales representatives from Amazon, Google, TikTok and other companies endured a three-hour traffic jam as their cars crawled toward a mammoth conference at an event space in the desert, 50 miles outside Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The lure: billions of dollars in Saudi money as the kingdom seeks to build a tech industry to complement its oil dominance.

“To the Future,” a sign read at

the event, called Leap.

More than 200,000 people converged at the conference, including Adam Selipsky, CEO of Amazon’s cloud computing division, who announced a \$5.3 billion investment in Saudi Arabia for data centers and artificial intelligence. Arvind Krishna, the CEO of IBM, spoke of what a Saudi minister called a “lifetime friendship” with the kingdom. Executives from Huawei and dozens of other firms made speeches. More than \$10 billion in deals were done there, according to Saudi Arabia’s state press agency.

“This is a great country,” Shou Chew, TikTok’s CEO, said during



Attendees at the Leap technology conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on March 6, 2024.

the meet, heralding the video app’s growth in the kingdom. “We expect to invest even more.”

Everybody in tech seems to want to make friends with Saudi Arabia as the kingdom has trained its sights on becoming a dominant player in AI — and is pumping in eye-popping sums to do so. Saudi Arabia created a \$100 billion fund this year to invest in AI and other technology.

The spending blitz stems from a generational effort outlined in 2016 by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and known as “Vision 2030.” For the tech industry, Saudi Arabia has long been a funding spigot. But the kingdom is now redirecting

its oil wealth into building a domestic tech industry, requiring international firms to establish roots there if they want its money. If Crown Prince Mohammed succeeds, he will place Saudi Arabia in the middle of an escalating global competition among China, the US and other countries. Combined with AI efforts by its neighbor, the UAE, Saudi Arabia’s plan has the potential to create a new power center in the global tech industry.

In Washington, many worry that the kingdom’s goals and authoritarian leanings could work against US interests — for instance, if Saudi Arabia ends up providing computing power to Chinese re-

searchers and companies. This month, the White House brokered a deal for Microsoft to invest in G42, an AI company in the UAE, which was intended partly to diminish China’s influence.

For China, the Persian Gulf region offers a big market, access to deep-pocketed investors and a chance to wield influence in countries traditionally allied with the United States. Deciding to set up in Riyadh comes with challenges. There’s the heat, reaching more than 110 degrees in the summer. While Saudi Arabia has loosened some restrictions in recent years, freedom of speech remains limited and LGBTQ people can face criminal penalties.

NYT

VISION 2030 رؤية 2030

2030

المملكة العربية السعودية
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA





Axis Bank reappoints Chaudhry as MD and CEO for 3 more years

AXIS BANK ON Thursday said its board has approved reappointment of Amitabh Chaudhry as managing director and chief executive officer for three years with effect from January 1, 2025.

This will be his second extension of three years. His last extension came into effect from January 1, 2022. Chaudhry joined the bank as



This will be
Amitabh
Chaudhry's
second
three-year
extension

MD & CEO in 2019. Prior to that he was MD & CEO of HDFC Life.

The reappointment is subject to approval of the Reserve Bank of India and shareholders, Axis Bank said in a regulatory filing.

Chaudhry is an alumnus of Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, and IIM Ahmedabad.

— PTI

Founded	3 December 1993; 30 years ago as <i>UTI Bank</i>
Headquarters	Axis House, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India ^[1]
Number of locations	4903 (March 2023)
Key people	Amitabh Chaudhry (MD & CEO) Shri Rakesh Makhija (chairperson)
Products	Retail banking Corporate banking Investment banking Mortgage loans Private banking Wealth management Asset management Investment management Mutual funds Exchange-traded funds Index funds Credit cards Risk management
Revenue	▲ ₹137,989 crore (US\$17 billion) ^[2] (2024)
Operating income	▲ ₹39,356 crore (US\$4.9 billion) ^[2] (2024)
Net income	▲ ₹26,386 crore (US\$3.3 billion) ^[2] (2024)
Total assets	▲ ₹1,518,239 crore (US\$190 billion) ^[2] (2024)
Total equity	▲ ₹155,512 crore (US\$19 billion) ^[2] (2024)
Owner	Life Insurance Corporation (9.19%) Specified Undertaking of Unit Trust of India (SUUTI) (4.68%) General Insurance Corporation of India (1.15%) The New India Assurance Company Limited (0.74%)

Mpox Virus

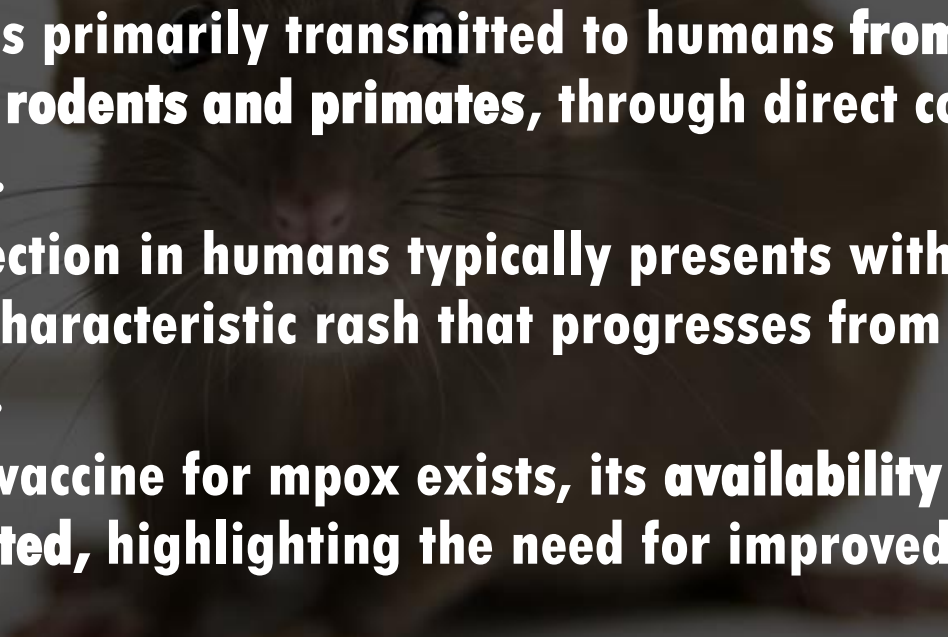
Recently, a study revealed a novel adaptation mechanism of the Mpox virus enhancing its ability to infect humans amidst recent outbreaks.



The name was changed from "monkeypox" to "mpox" to avoid stigma towards monkeys and reflect the virus's direct human infectivity.

Mpox, also known as monkeypox, is a DNA virus. It belongs to the family Poxviridae, which consists of large, double-stranded DNA viruses.

The virus was first identified in monkeys in 1958 but has since been found to infect humans as well.

- 
- A dark brown mouse is centered in the background, looking directly at the camera. The mouse's eyes are dark and prominent, and its whiskers are visible. The background is a solid, dark grey color.
- **Transmission:** Mpox is primarily transmitted to humans from animals, particularly rodents and primates, through direct contact or through contaminated objects.
 - **Symptoms:** Mpox infection in humans typically presents with fever, headache, muscle aches, and a characteristic rash that progresses from macules to papules to vesicles and pustules.
 - **Vaccination:** While a vaccine for mpox exists, its availability and effectiveness are limited, highlighting the need for improved prevention and control measures.

- Global Outbreaks:
- Mpox gained global attention during a widespread outbreak that affected over 100,000 people in more than 118 countries in 2022-2023. The outbreak was characterised by high human-to-human transmission, particularly through close contact and the sexual route.

Feature	Smallpox	Monkeypox	Chickenpox
Virus	<i>Variola virus</i>	<i>Monkeypox virus</i>	<i>Varicella-zoster virus (VZV)</i>
Severity	Highly severe, often fatal	Milder than smallpox, rarely fatal	Mild
Status	Eradicated in 1980	Endemic in Central and West Africa, cases emerging elsewhere	Common childhood illness, less common due to vaccination
Transmission	Highly contagious through respiratory droplets and contact with infected lesions	Spread through contact with infected animals, lesions, or bodily fluids	Highly contagious through respiratory droplets and contact with lesions
Symptoms	Fever, headache, severe fatigue, vomiting, followed by a deep-seated, pus-filled rash	Fever, headache, swollen lymph nodes, followed by a rash that progresses through stages	Fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, followed by an itchy, fluid-filled rash
Vaccination	No longer needed	Not routinely recommended, may be given to high-risk individuals	Routine vaccination for children and adults who haven't had chickenpox

- **Which of the following are the reasons for the occurrence of multi-drug resistance in microbial pathogens in India? (2019)**

1. Genetic predisposition of some people

2. Taking incorrect doses of antibiotics to cure diseases

3. Using antibiotics in livestock farming

4. Multiple chronic diseases in some people

- **Select the correct answer using the code given below.**

- **(a) 1 and 2**

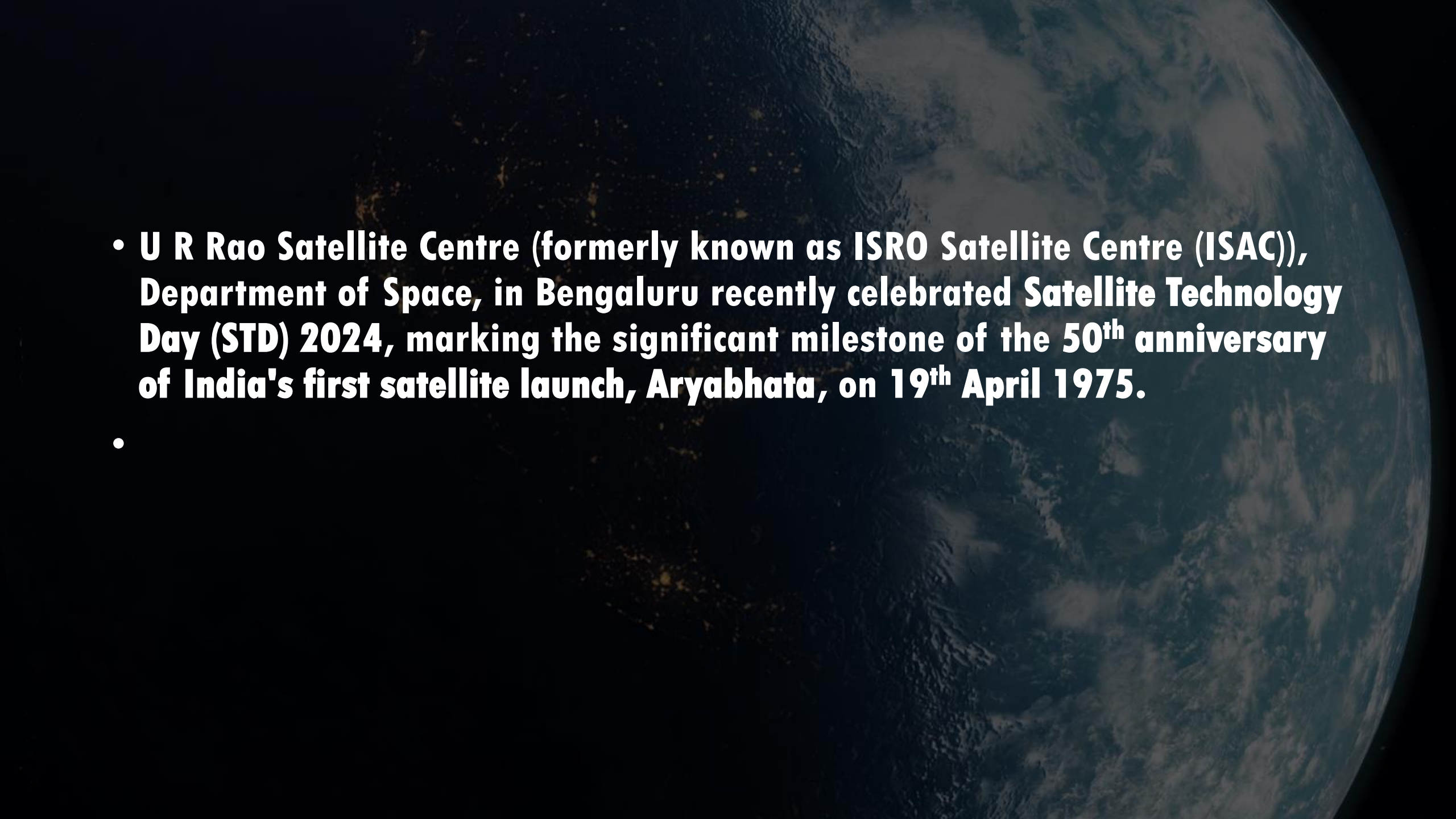
- **(b) 2 and 3 only**

- **(c) 1, 3 and 4**

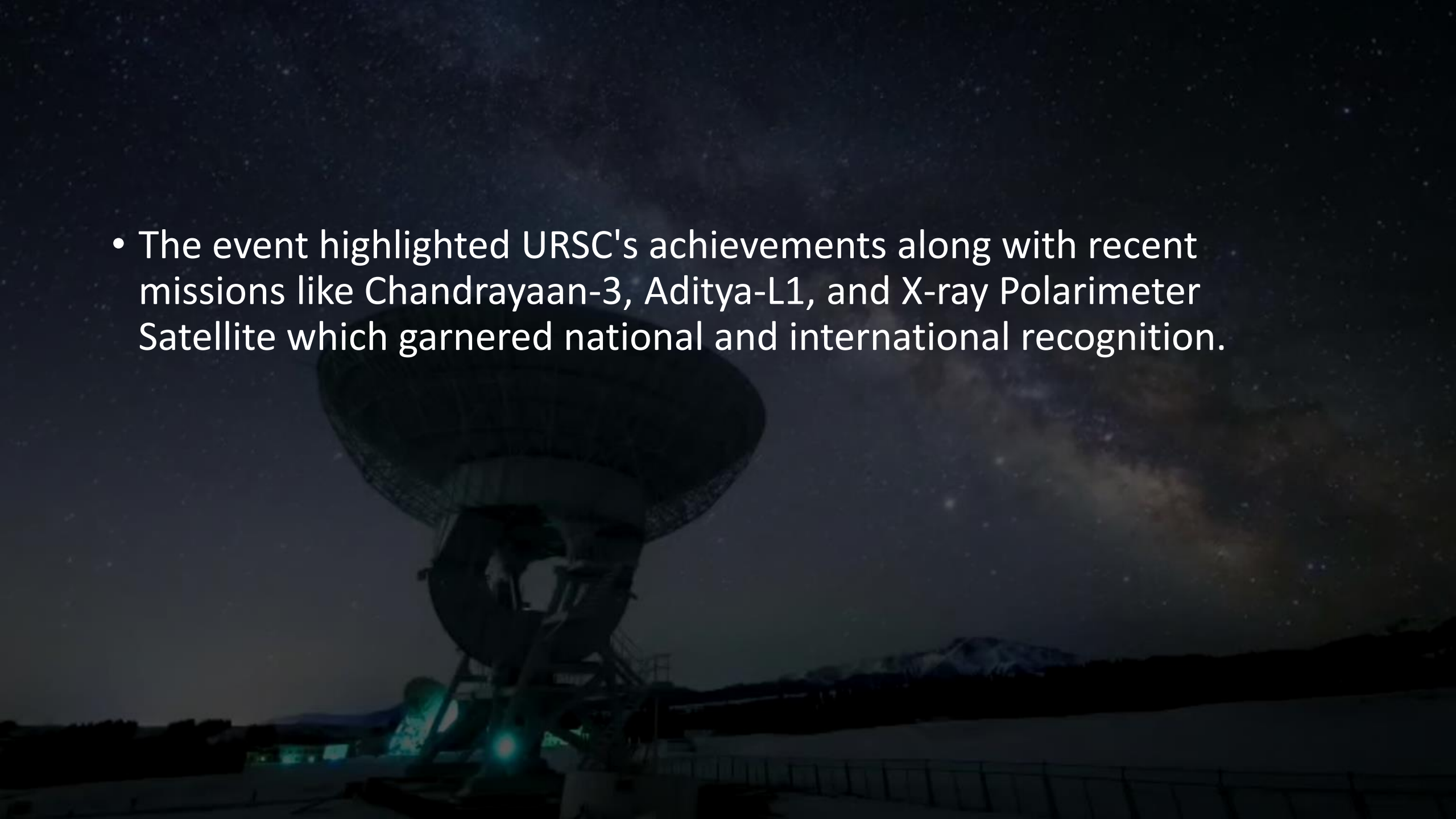
- **(d) 2, 3 and 4**

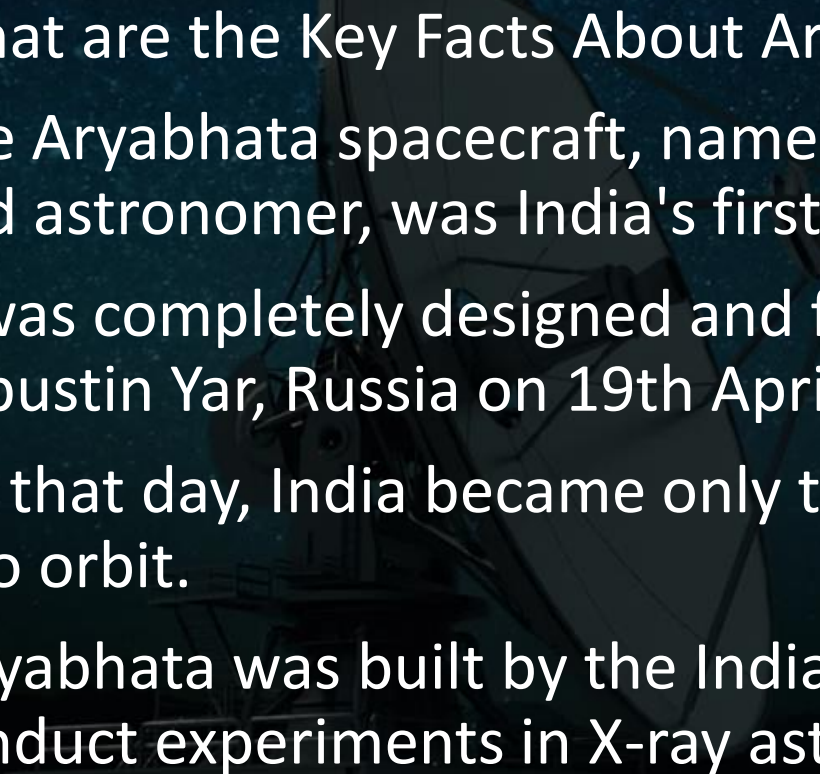
A large satellite dish antenna is positioned on the left side of the frame, pointing towards the right. The dish is a complex structure with a large, curved reflector and a central feed horn. The background is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous stars and the bright, glowing band of the Milky Way galaxy. The foreground is dark, suggesting a desert or high-altitude environment. The overall scene conveys a sense of advanced technology and space exploration.

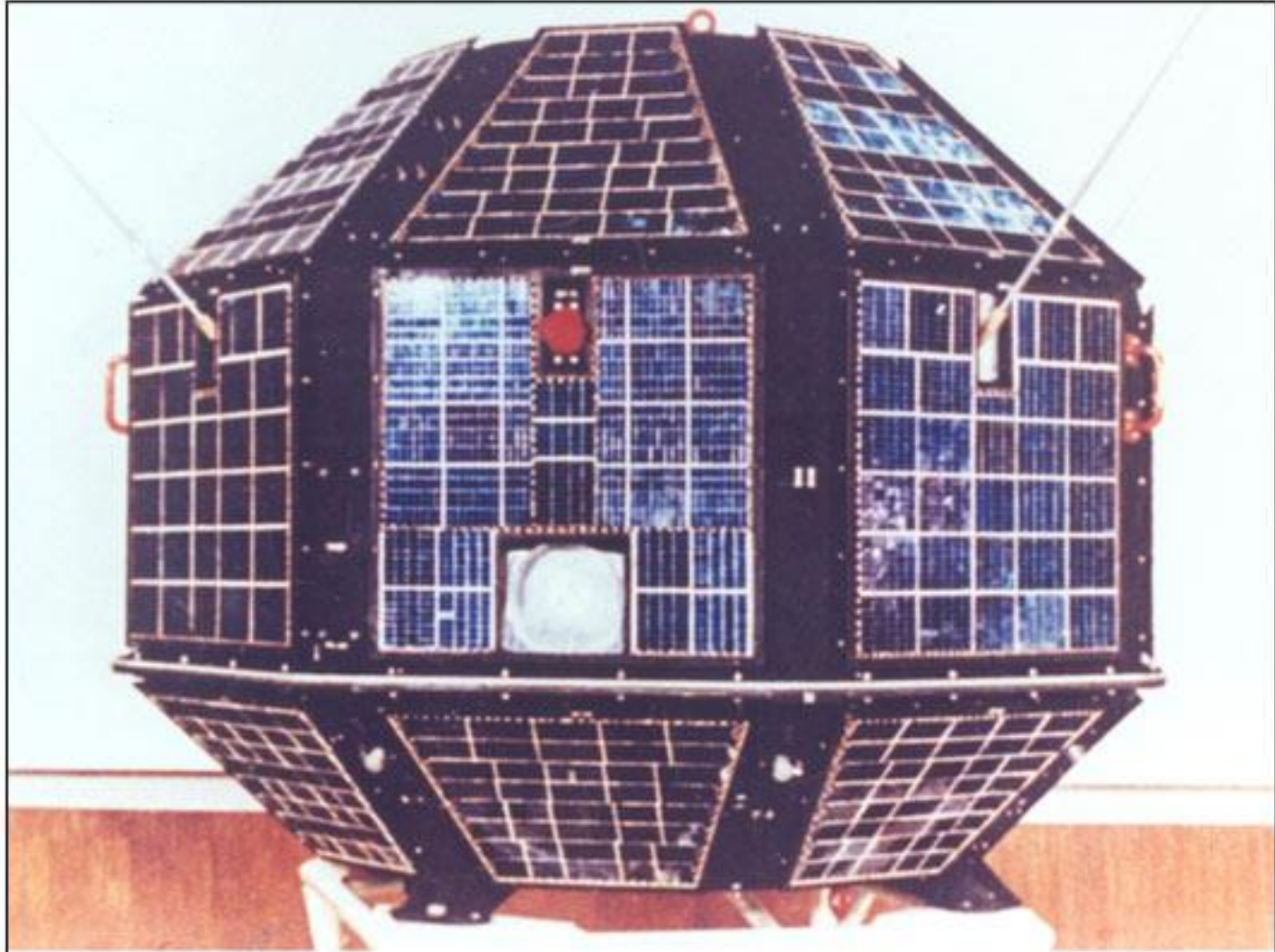
Satellite Technology Day 2024

- 
- **U R Rao Satellite Centre (formerly known as ISRO Satellite Centre (ISAC)), Department of Space, in Bengaluru recently celebrated Satellite Technology Day (STD) 2024, marking the significant milestone of the 50th anniversary of India's first satellite launch, Aryabhata, on 19th April 1975.**
 -

- The event highlighted URSC's achievements along with recent missions like Chandrayaan-3, Aditya-L1, and X-ray Polarimeter Satellite which garnered national and international recognition.



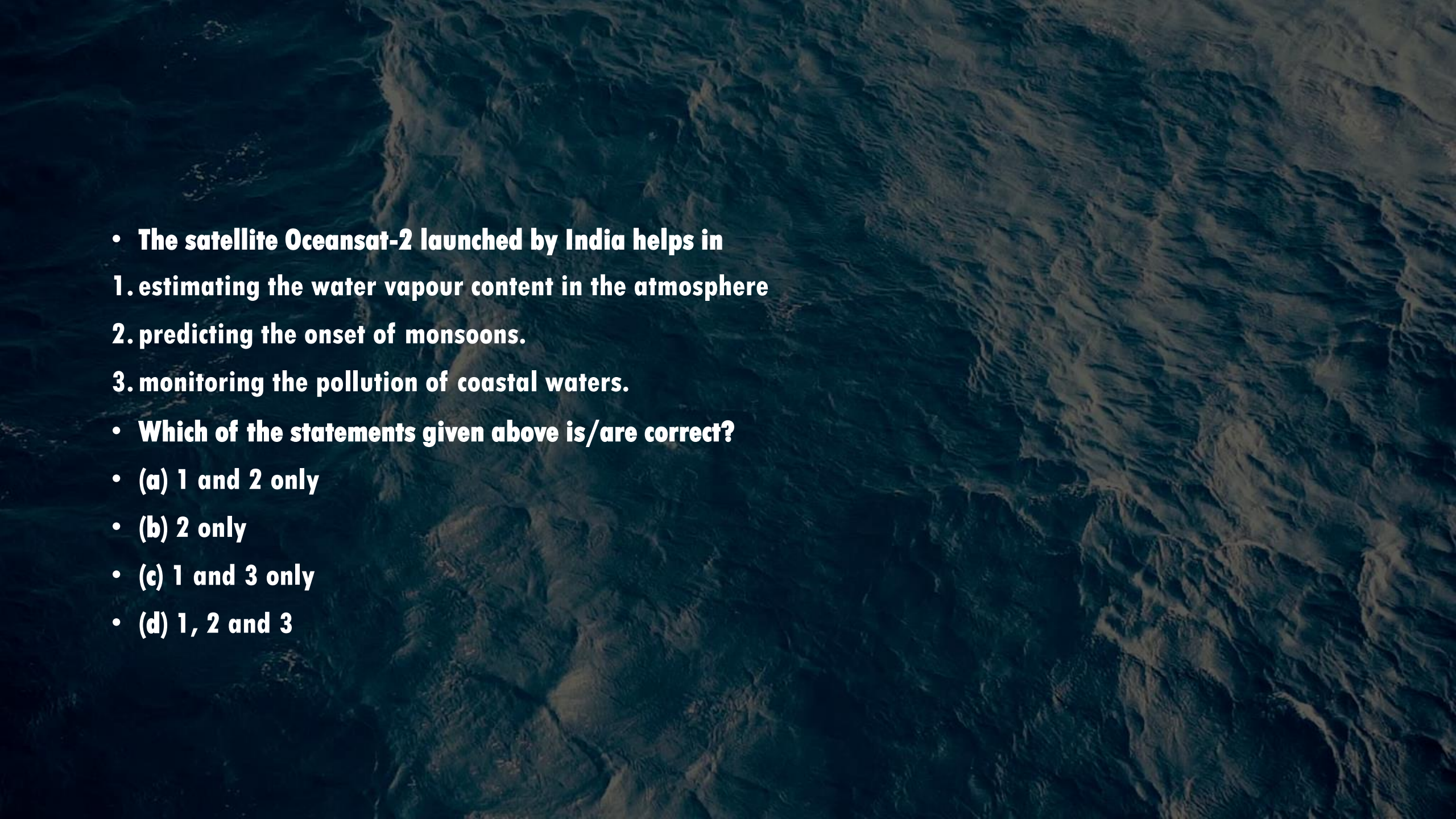
- 
- A faint, semi-transparent image of the Aryabhata satellite is visible in the background, showing its large parabolic dish and various instruments.
- What are the Key Facts About Aryabhata Satellite?
 - The Aryabhata spacecraft, named after the 5th Century CE mathematician and astronomer, was India's first satellite.
 - It was completely designed and fabricated in India and launched from Kapustin Yar, Russia on 19th April 1975.
 - On that day, India became only the world's 11th nation to send a satellite into orbit.
 - Aryabhata was built by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) to conduct experiments in X-ray astronomy, aeronomics, and solar physics.



Aryabhata Satellite (1975)


- **With reference to India's satellite launch vehicles, consider the following statements: (2018)**
 1. **PSLVs launch satellites useful for Earth resources monitoring whereas GSLVs are designed mainly to launch communication satellites.**
 2. **Satellites launched by PSLV appear to remain permanently fixed in the same position in the sky, as viewed from a particular location on Earth.**
 3. **GSLV Mk III is a four-staged launch vehicle with the first and third stages using solid rocket motors; and the second and fourth stages using liquid rocket engines.**
- **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**
- **(a) 1 only**
(b) 2 and 3
(c) 1 and 2
(d) 3 only

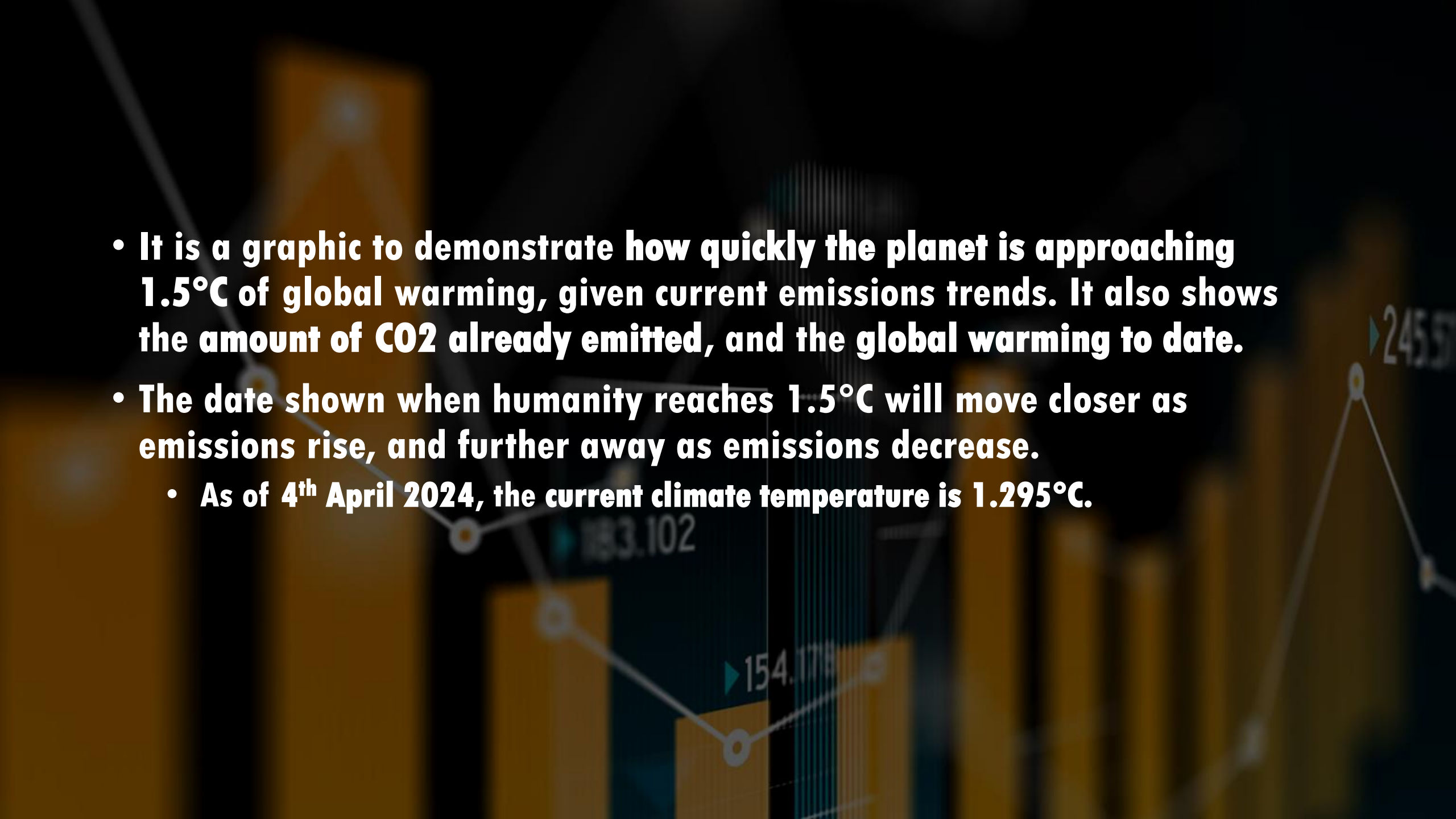


- 
- **The satellite Oceansat-2 launched by India helps in**
 - 1. estimating the water vapour content in the atmosphere**
 - 2. predicting the onset of monsoons.**
 - 3. monitoring the pollution of coastal waters.**
 - **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**
 - **(a) 1 and 2 only**
 - **(b) 2 only**
 - **(c) 1 and 3 only**
 - **(d) 1, 2 and 3**

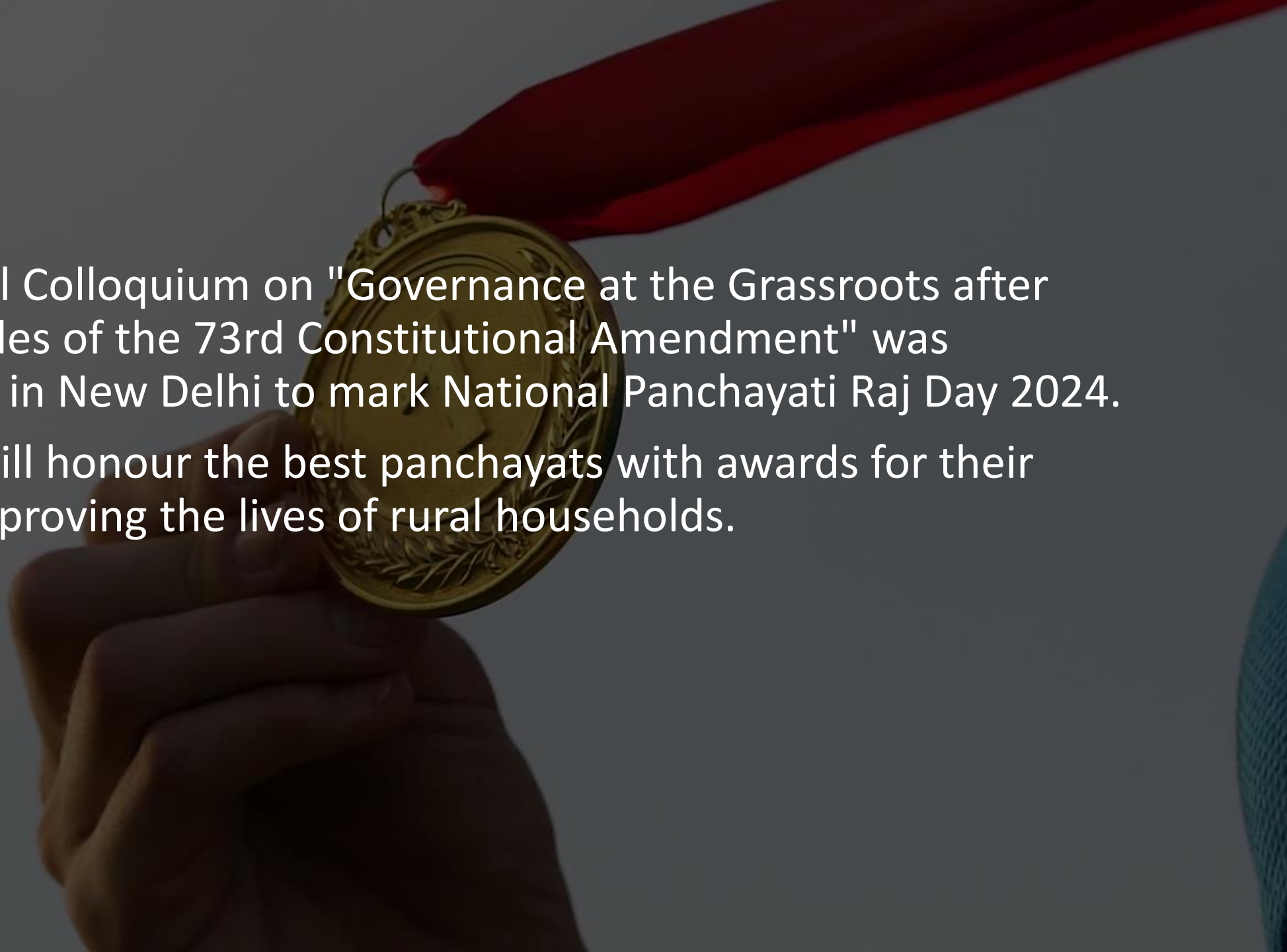
A large, minimalist clock face with two hands, serving as a background for the text. The clock is dark brown with a lighter brown border. The hands are black and simple in design. The text is white and centered over the clock face.

India's Biggest Climate Clock

- 
- A small green plant with several leaves is growing out of a crack in a dry, cracked concrete surface. The background is a dark, textured wall with visible cracks and discoloration, suggesting a harsh, arid environment. The plant is the central focus, symbolizing resilience and growth despite difficult conditions.
- Recently, the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), installed and activated India's biggest Climate Clock at the CSIR Headquarters in New Delhi as a part of the Earth Day Celebrations.
 - The event signifies CSIR's aim to spread awareness about climate change and to make people energy literate.
 - It was launched in 2015 to provide a measuring stick against which viewers can track climate change mitigation progress.

- 
- It is a graphic to demonstrate how quickly the planet is approaching 1.5°C of global warming, given current emissions trends. It also shows the amount of CO2 already emitted, and the global warming to date.
 - The date shown when humanity reaches 1.5°C will move closer as emissions rise, and further away as emissions decrease.
 - As of 4th April 2024, the current climate temperature is 1.295°C.

National Panchayati Raj Day 2024

- 
- A hand is shown holding a gold medal with a red ribbon. The medal is circular and features a central emblem surrounded by a laurel wreath. The background is a dark, muted blue-grey color.
- The National Colloquium on "Governance at the Grassroots after Three Decades of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment" was inaugurated in New Delhi to mark National Panchayati Raj Day 2024.
 - The event will honour the best panchayats with awards for their efforts in improving the lives of rural households.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj in India observes 24th April as National Panchayati Raj Day each year.

The 73rd Amendment Act of 1992 which gave constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and improved local self-governance in India was enacted on this day.

India's three-tiered (Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad) administrative structure is known as the Panchayati Raj system, it aims to bring about improvement at the grassroots level in rural areas.

Sinking China

A recent research reported that big cities in China are sinking under their weight, suffering from moderate to severe subsidence.



Study – A systematic national-scale satellite assessment of land subsidence in 82 of China's major cities from 2015 to 2022.




Technology used

Space-borne Sentinel-1 Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar (InSAR)

Ground-based GPS data.

InSAR uses highly precise radar pulses to measure the change in distance between the satellite and the ground surface.



Findings – Nearly 50% of major cities are sinking.

45% of examined urban lands are subsiding faster than 3 millimeters (mm) per year

16% are subsiding faster than 10mm per year



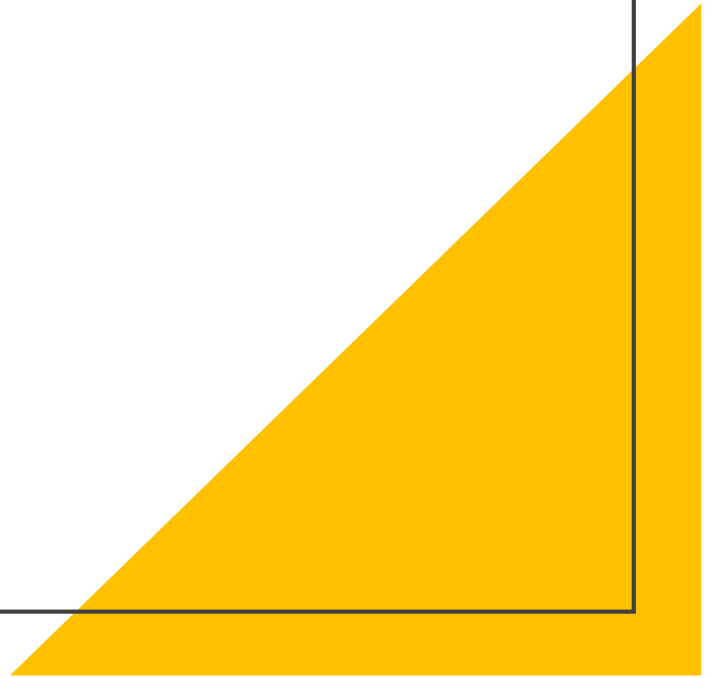
The sinking is due to a range of factors, including groundwater extraction and the weight of the built environment.

It could affect roughly one-third of the nation's urban population.

By 2120, 22-26% of China's coastal lands will have a relative elevation lower than sea level, because of the combined effect of city subsidence and sea-level rise.

Recommendations – Long-term and sustained control of ground water extraction.

Reality of the Swachh Bharat Mission



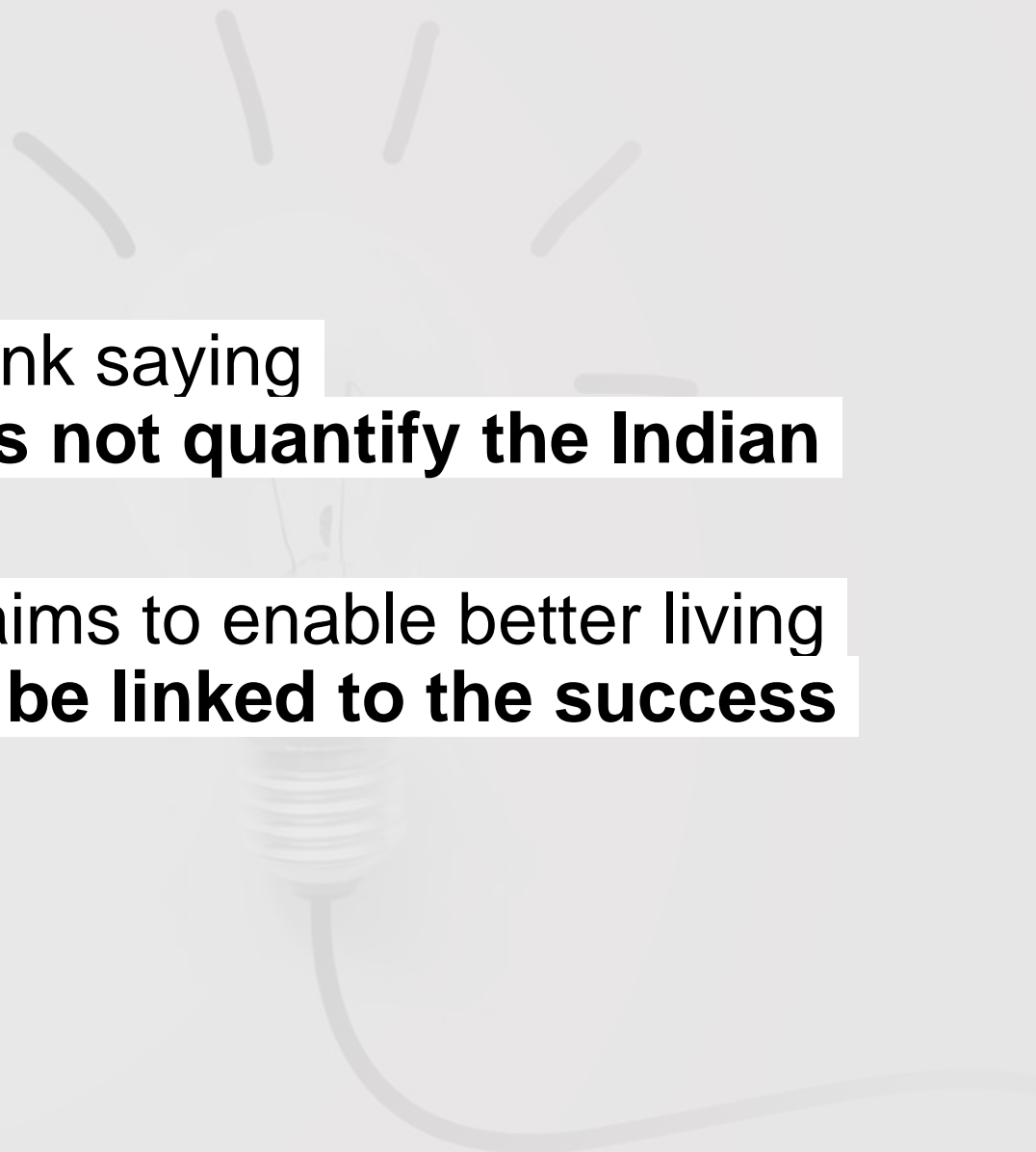
India was ranked **right at the bottom of 180 countries** in the **Environment Performance Index (EPI)** in 2022.

- The ranking raises questions about the **success of the Swachh Bharat Mission.**

About

The EPI ranks countries on **climate change performance, environmental health, and ecosystem vitality.**

- It measures 40 performance indicators across 11 issue categories, **such as air quality, and drinking water and sanitation.**

- 
- The government responded to the rank saying the **methodology is faulty and does not quantify the Indian scenario objectively.**
 - The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) aims to enable better living standards, so the **poor ranking can be linked to the success of SBM.**
 -

Inheritance Tax

The chairman of Indian Overseas Congress, Sam Pitroda's comments on the inheritance tax, have raised the specter of wealth redistribution.

Inheritance tax

Inheritance tax, also called **estate tax**, is imposed on the total value of money and property left behind by a deceased individual before it is passed on to their legal heirs.

This tax is usually determined by considering the value of the assets minus any eligible exemptions or deductions.

- The main goals of inheritance tax are to raise government revenue and facilitate wealth redistribution.
- **In India, there is no tax on inheritance** as the Inheritance or Estate Tax. It was eliminated in **1985**

● Lessons from India's earlier tryst with it

INHERITANCE TAX WAS introduced in 1953, under the Estate Duty Act, but was abolished by the Rajiv Gandhi-led government in 1985. The high cost of collections, tax avoidance, and double taxation were cited as reasons for scrapping it. India also had a gift tax and a wealth tax, which were abolished in 1998 and 2015, respectively. In the Budget for FY16, the government had announced the abolition of

wealth tax and its replacement with a surcharge on the super rich. At present, a 10% surcharge is levied on personal income over ₹50 lakh. The maximum surcharge rate is 25% as per the new tax regime, if annual income exceeds ₹2 crore. In 2019, the government had discussed internally the possibility of reintroducing the inheritance tax. It was part of the Budget formulation exercise, but the idea didn't materialise.



● Other countries' experiences

AT LEAST 26 countries, including Italy, Belgium, Japan, South Korea, France, Spain, Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom and the US, have been imposing inheritance tax in the range of 4-80%. However, in the US certain types of trusts can help avoid estate taxes. An irrevocable trust transfers asset ownership from the original owner to the trust beneficiaries, without any payment of inheritance tax.



'Million Miyawaki' project

The Embassy of Israel in India has joined the 'Million Miyawaki' project, aimed at improving air quality in Indian cities through mass afforestation in urban spaces.



In collaboration with the Million Miyawaki Foundation, the embassy will plant a million trees in Delhi-NCR, creating forest-like Miyawaki plantations with up to 30 locally sourced species (as part of Earth Day celebrations)

It is inspired by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, and boosts greenery in compact spaces.

It fosters multi-layered forests with quick growth, mimicking natural biodiversity.

Though they lack some natural forest attributes like medicinal properties, they serve as effective carbon sinks and mitigate ecological damage from activities like mining.

Earth Day, originating in 1970
after widespread protests
against environmental
degradation is now observed
globally on April 22nd.



Coordinated
by EARTHDAY.ORG, formerly
Earth Day Network, its aim is
to mobilize a massive
environmental movement for
transformative change.

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A group of people are shown in a dimly lit room, clapping their hands. The focus is on the hands in the foreground, with the background slightly blurred. The overall mood is one of appreciation and celebration.

Thank you
guys.
