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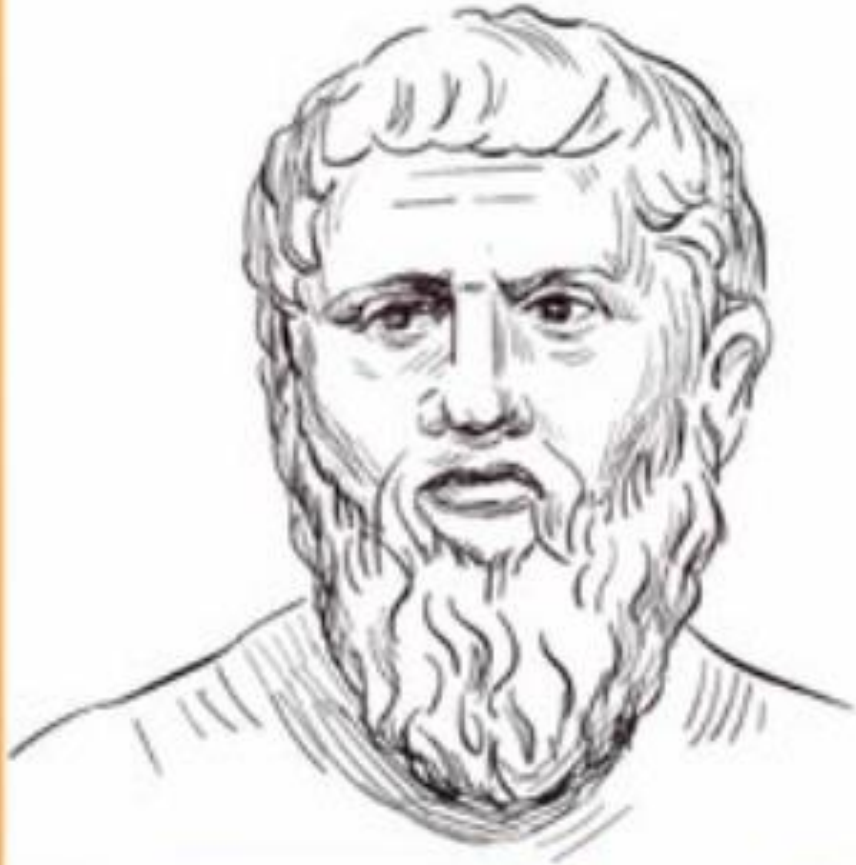
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# Quote of the Day

"Better be unborn than untaught, for  
ignorance is the root of misfortune."

- Plato

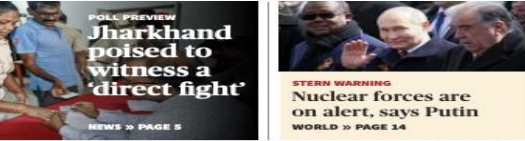
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**KEJRIWAL CASE**  
ED cautions top court against granting bail  
NEWS » PAGE 4



**POLL PREVIEW**  
Jharkhand poised to witness a 'direct fight'  
NEWS » PAGE 5



**PARLEY**  
Placing trust in YouTube over TV for news  
Are we in the middle of a paradigm shift?  
OPINION » PAGE 9

**THE KOHLI SHOW**  
RCB trounces PBKS, remains in the hunt  
SPORT » PAGE 16

### INSIDE



**SP will not open its account in U.P., says Adityanath**

**LUCKNOW**  
Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday said that the Samajwadi Party (SP) would not even be able to open its account in the Lok Sabha election and all the five members of the party's family were set to lose the polls. » PAGE 2

### Taliban trying to sneak people into Indian mission

**NEW YORK**  
Days after Afghanistan's most senior diplomat in India resigned over charges of smuggling, diplomats still loyal to the previous democratic regime in Kabul warn that the Taliban are making another attempt to install a nominee in India, and urged India not to "normalise" ties with the Taliban. » PAGE 4

## JJP, INLD seek floor test, say BJP govt. lost majority

Dushyant tells Governor that JJP is open to backing a non-BJP party for forming a government in Haryana; Congress leader Hooda asks him to present all 10 party MLAs before the Governor

### The Hindu Bureau CHURCHLAN

After three independent MLAs with support to the Bharatiya Janata Party government in Haryana earlier this week, the Jannayak Janta Party and the Indian National Lok Dal on Thursday wrote to the Governor seeking directions for an immediate floor test to determine the majority of the government or the imposition of President's Rule in the State. Jannayak Janta Party leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, whose party had remained absent during the voting on a confidence motion for the BJP government in March, said in his letter to the Governor that his party did not support the BJP government and was open to backing any political party in the State for government formation. The letter came a day after he offered to "consid-



DUSHYANT CHAUTALA  
Jannayak Janta Party leader

er" outside support to the Congress in Haryana to the legislative Assembly". Referring to the withdrawal of support by three independent MLAs and two Assembly seats falling vacant, Mr. Chautala said in his letter that "given these developments and the clear stance of my party - i.e. the JJP, which does not extend its support to the present government and is open to backing any other political party for government formation, it is evident that the incumbent government no longer commands a majority in the legislative Assembly".

Given these developments and the clear stance of my party... it is evident that the incumbent government no longer commands a majority in the legislative Assembly". "Reinstate stability" Saying that there was an urgent need to "reinstate stability" and "uphold democratic norms" in Haryana, Mr. Chautala, the Uchana MLA, sought directions to the present State government under Article 174 of the Constitution to prove its majority on the floor of the House or the imposition of President's Rule. INLD secretary-general and the party's lone MP Abhay Chautala too wrote to the Governor seeking directions to the BJP government to prove its majority. Congress leader and former Chief Minister Bhubinder Singh Hooda said the JJP must parade all 10 of its MLAs before the Governor amid reports that some of them had turned rebels. He said that the Congress had sought an appointment for its delegation to meet with the Governor in view of the prevailing political situation, adding that his party would also parade all 30 of its MLAs before the Governor. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini said that his government had proved its majority just over a month ago and could prove it again if required, but noted that the Opposition seemed to be in a hurry. He advised Mr. Chautala to instead worry about the Lok Sabha election as he had lost the faith of the people.

## Cong. targets PM over 'drain of wealth benefiting cronies'

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleged that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had stopped "abusing" industrialists Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani and hinted at a deal, the Congress stepped up its counter-attack on the BJP and Mr. Modi over the issue of crony capitalism. In a fresh video addressing the youth, Mr. Gandhi said Mr. Modi would resort to "drama and distraction" in the next four to five days since he knows that he won't be Prime Minister again and the election is slipping out of his hands. "Unemployment is the biggest issue and Narendra Modi had promised you [the youth] two crore jobs every year. He lied, instead announced demonetisation and implemented a flawed GST but did everything for the benefit of people like Adani," Mr. Gandhi said in his video. "On June 4, the INDIA bloc will form the government and by August 15, the process of giving employment to 30 lakh youth will start under *bharati bharrasa* households have increased from ₹7 lakh crore to ₹14 lakh crore in the last three years and in September 2023, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) bulletin showed India's net financial savings at just 5.1% of the GDP. "In a separate sense, the BJP government is responsible for ripping away *mangalutras*, as its economic failures have pushed gold loans to a record high. Outstanding gold loans have crossed ₹1 lakh crore for the first time in India's history, as per RBI data. Any growth that has happened since 2014, has been only for the crony industrialist friends of the Prime Minister. Today, 21 billionaires have more wealth than the poorest 70 crore Indians combined," the Congress leader alleged. In a separate post on X, former Finance Minister and Congress leader P. Chidambaram said the Congress manifesto on the economy has "not been able to support the private sector and every kind of enterprise - large, medium, small, and micro."



Rahul Gandhi addressing the youth in a video. PTI

[job assurance] scheme," he added. In a separate statement, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh accused the Modi government of aiding the "drain of wealth" from ordinary Indians to crony corporates. "Since 2014, we have seen a 'drain of wealth' from Bharat ke *parivar* (India's families) to Modi ke *parivar* (Modi's family). This is the intentional effect of the Prime Minister's *Hum Do Humare Do* policy of favouring his cronies. The National Accounts Statistics released on May 7 show that India's net household savings have decreased by ₹9 lakh crore in three years," Mr. Ramesh said. He noted that loans to

## Air India Express cabin crew call off strike; 25 sacked staff to be reinstated

### Jagriti Chandra NEW DELHI

Air India Express has agreed to reinstate 25 cabin crew whose services were terminated after a large number of them reported "sick" since May 6, while the flight crew have agreed to report to duty following a meeting mediated by the Chief Labour Commissioner (CLC) in New Delhi on Thursday. The representatives of the airline management said that all the issues raised by the cabin crew pertaining to alleged discrimination emanating from the merger with erstwhile AirAsia India and the removal of allowances will be resolved. The CLC will



Flights interrupted: Air India Express had on Thursday cancelled 85 flights due to disruptions because of cabin crew shortage. PTI

hold another meeting on May 28 on the matter. On the third day of the protest on "leave", Air India Express was forced to cancel 85 flights across its network. Another Tata Group airline, Air India, supported it by operating flights on 20 of its routes, according to a media statement issued by Air India Express. The CLC called a conciliation meeting after over 200 cabin crew at Air India Express started reporting "sick" from May 6 resulting

in flight disruptions. According to a letter addressed to one of the cabin crew personnel late on May 8 informing him of his immediate termination, the airline said, "Your act of reporting sick for work amounts to a concerted action with a common understanding to not operate the flight and disrupt services of the company. This is not only in violation of the applicable laws but also violates the Air India Express Limited Employees' Service Rules." The Air India Express cabin crew are unhappy over "preferential treatment" for employees of the erstwhile AirAsia India resulting in certain postings granted to the latter.

## The pilgrim's progress



Haj pilgrims from Kashmir greet their relatives before leaving for the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The first batch of pilgrims this year set out on the journey from Srinagar on Thursday. NISSAR AHMAD

## Markets sink on fears over poll outcome

### Lalathendu Mishra MUMBAI

Uncertainty over the outcome of the Lok Sabha election led to panic selling in stock markets on Thursday, with key benchmark indices falling about 1.5%. The S&P 500 Sensex fell 1,062 points, or 1.45%, to 72,404. The NSE Nifty-50 index also shed 345 points, or 1.55%, to 21,957.5. Except auto stocks, major sectors led by energy, metals, and realty faced selling pressure. Larsen & Toubro, down 6% led the fall among Sensex stocks,



The S&P 500 Sensex fell 1,062 points, or 1.45%, to 72,404. followed by Asian Paints, which fell 4.68%. FULL REPORT » PAGE 12

## U.S. won't supply arms to Israel if it attacks Rafah: Biden

### Associated Press WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden said on Wednesday that he would not supply offensive weapons that Israel could use to launch an all-out assault on Rafah - the last major Hamas stronghold in Gaza - over concern for the well-being of the more than 1 million civilians sheltering there. Mr. Biden, in an interview with CNN, said the U.S. was still committed to Israel's defence and would supply Iron Dome rocket interceptors and other defensive arms, but that if Israel goes into Rafah,

"we're not going to supply the weapons and artillery shells used". The U.S. has historically provided "proportionate" amounts of military aid to Israel. That has only accelerated in the aftermath of Hamas's October 7 attack that killed some 1,200 Israeli and led to about 250 being taken captive by militants. Mr. Biden's comments and his decision last week to pause a shipment of heavy bombs to Israel are the most striking manifestations of the growing day that Israel's actions around Rafah had "not yet" crossed his red lines, but has repeated that Israel



U.S. President Joe Biden steps off of Marine One before departing Chicago O'Hare international Airport in Chicago on Wednesday. AP

needs to do far more to protect the lives of civilians in Gaza. The shipment was supposed to consist of 1,800 900-kg bombs and 1,700 225-kg bombs, according to a senior U.S. administration official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter. The focus of U.S. concern was the larger cache of explosives and how they could be used in a dense urban area. "Civilians have been killed in Gaza as a consequence of those bombs and other ways in which they go after population centres," Mr. Biden said. "Not walking away" "We're not walking away from Israel's security," Mr. Biden continued. "We're walking away from Israel's ability to wage war in those areas," Mr. Biden said. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin earlier on Wednesday confirmed the weapons delay, telling the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defence that the U.S. paused shipment of high payload munitions. Meanwhile, Israel's military spokesperson said the Army has the weapons it needs for its offensive in Rafah. Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said negotiations with the U.S. remain closed, and that disagreement "should be resolved behind closed doors."

# JJP, INLD seek floor test, say BJP govt. lost majority

Dushyant tells Governor that JJP is open to backing a non-BJP party for forming a government in Haryana; Congress leader Hooda asks him to present all 10 party MLAs before the Governor

**The Hindu Bureau**  
GURUGRAM

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er" outside support to the Congress in Haryana to topple the BJP government.

Referring to the withdrawal of support by three Independent MLAs and two Assembly seats falling vacant, Mr. Chautala said in his letter that "given these developments and the clear stance of my party - i.e. the JJP, which does not extend its support to the present government and is open to backing any other political party for government formation, it is evident that the incumbent government no longer

commands a majority in the legislative Assembly".

## 'Reinstate stability'

Saying that there was an urgent need to "reinstate stability" and "uphold democratic norms" in Haryana, Mr. Chautala, the Uchana MLA, sought directions to the present State government under Article 174 of the Constitution to prove its majority on the floor of the House or the imposition of President's Rule.

INLD secretary-general and the party's lone MLA Abhay Chautala too wrote

to the Governor seeking directions to the BJP government to prove its majority.

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He advised Mr. Chautala to instead worry about the Lok Sabha election as he had lost the faith of the people.

# NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION

- **First-ever** no-confidence motion was moved in **1963**
- **Total 26** so far (the one on July 20 will be 27th)
- **Indira Gandhi** govt had faced **maximum number** of no-confidence motion | **15**

## Three in last 25 years

**July 1993** | Against the Narasimha Rao govt after Babri Masjid demolition (Govt won confidence vote)

**April 1999** | Against the Vajpayee govt (Govt lost by one vote)

**August 2003** | Against the Vajpayee govt (Govt won confidence vote)

**July 2008** | It was a trust vote after CPM-led Left Front withdrew support from the Manmohan Singh govt over the Indo-US nuclear deal. Govt proved its majority

# FLOOR TEST

## Why in news?

The political situation in Maharashtra has once again brought attention to the Governor's ability to call for a floor test.

## Article 175(2)

Article says that the Governor can summon the House and call for a floor test to prove whether the government has the numbers.

## Article 174(2)(b)

It gives the Governor the authority to dissolve the Assembly with the assistance & recommendation of the cabinet.

Governor can apply his mind when the advice comes from a CM whose majority could be in doubt.

## Supreme Court on Powers of Governor

SC upheld the powers of the Speaker to call for a floor test if there is a prima facie view that the government has lost its majority. Governor is not deprived of the power to order a floor test.

## Article 163

Article says that the governor shall exercise her or his functions with the aid and advice of the council of ministers.



## EC urged to disclose authenticated record of voter turnout

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Flagging their concerns over the fluctuation in figures of voter turnouts in the first two phases of the ongoing Lok Sabha election, a group of civil society members and former bureaucrats have urged the Election Commission of India to "immediately disclose" through its website, the authenticated record of voter turnout as contained in Part I of Form 17C — which is the account of votes recorded in each polling station.

"We are writing to flag our concerns arising from the large fluctuations in figures of voter turnout in the first two phases of the ongoing general elections and to urge the Election Commission of India to immediately disclose through its website, the authenticated record of voter turnout as contained in Part I of Form 17C," the letter addressed to Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar

and other Election Commissioners said. As per Rule 498 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, at the close of polling, the presiding officer has to prepare an account of votes recorded in Part I of Form 17C and also furnish an authenticated copy of this to every polling agent.

The letter urged the EC to immediately upload on the Commission's website a "scanned legible copy" of Part I of Form 17C (Account of Votes Recorded) of every polling station where voting took place in the first three phases. Further, for the remaining phases, this information must be publicly displayed on the EC's website within 48 hours of the close of each phase. Signatories to the letters included transparency activist Anjali Bhardwaj, lawyer and activist Prashant Bhushan, Yogendra Yadav of Swaraj Abhiyan, and former Union Minister Devasahayam, Sundar Barua, and Deb Mukharji.

## 'No official communique from Canada in Nijjar case'

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Days after Canada arrested three individuals in connection with the murder of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) here said the Canadian authorities have informed that the individuals are Indians but Ottawa has not provided any official communique.

"Let me first make it clear that no specific or relevant evidence or information has been shared by the Canadian authorities till date. You will therefore understand our view that the matter is being pre-judged. Obviously, there are political interests at work. We have long maintained that separatist, extremists and those advocating violence have been given political space in Canada," said MEA official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

## Trinamool urges EC to take action against Suwendu Adhikari

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Trinamool Congress lodged a complaint with the Election Commission against BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari seeking criminal proceedings against him for "concocting" rape allegations and running a fake narrative regarding the Sandeshkhali incident.

The complaint is based on a purported video in which a man is heard saying that Mr. Adhikari, the leader of Opposition in the State Assembly, was behind the whole conspiracy. In the sting operation video shot by a news platform at the Trinamool Congress on social media, Mr. Kaval is heard saying sexual harassment complaints were filed at the behest of Mr. Adhikari. The BJP has rejected the video accusing the Trinamool

## Vyjayanthimala, Chiranjeevi, Hormusji N. Cama receive Padma awards from Murmu

Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

Actors Vyjayanthimala and Konidela Chiranjeevi; the late P. Rajagopal, the first woman judge of the Supreme Court, and *Satish Chandra Samachar* owner Hormusji N. Cama were among the eminent persons given the Padma awards by President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday.

Ladakh's spiritual leader Tenzin Rinpoche and Tamil actor 'Captain' Vijayakanth (both posthumous), BJP leader O. Rajagopal and Kundan Vyas, group editor and CEO of Gujarati newspaper *Jannabhooni*, were also given the Padma awards. While 90-year-old Ms. Cama and 89-year-old Mr. Chiranjeevi were given the Padma Vibhushan, Mr. Cama, Rajagopal, Mr. Vyas, Vijayakanth, Rinpoche, and Bevi were given the Padma Bhushan.

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## Bail to Kejriwal to campaign will incentivise criminals to become politicians, says ED

SC to pronounce order on interim bail today; Central agency argues that polls are held through the year and no special provision should be made

Krishnadhas Rajagopal  
NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Thursday cautioned the Supreme Court against granting interim bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the liquor policy case, saying that if "unscrupulous" politicians are given bail for campaigning, none of them can ever be arrested, as elections are an "all-year round phenomenon" in India. There were 123 elections across the country in the past five years alone, the ED said in a 44-page affidavit.

The affidavit coincided with an announcement made in open court by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who heads the bench which heard the Kejriwal case, that the court would grant its order on the question of interim bail to the chief minister on May 10. The case is listed as item 50 before Justices



AAP supporters have held several protests against the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Khanna and Dipankar Datta on Friday. Grant of interim bail to Mr. Kejriwal to campaign for the ongoing Lok Sabha election would be anathema to the rule of law and equality, and create a precedent which would permit "all unscrupulous politicians to commit crimes, avoid investigation under the garb of one election or the other, be it municipal, panchayat, Assembly or general elections, and thereafter, upon being arrested, seek interim bail to campaign for one election or the other, it noted.

Giving the Chief Minister interim bail would create two separate classes of people in the country. "The ordinary people who are bound by the rule of law and politicians who can seek exemption from laws with the hope of securing interim bail to campaign for elections," the ED argued.

An interim bail for Mr. Kejriwal to canvass votes for the Aam Aadmi Party as a "stunt campaigner" would incentivise every criminal to be a politician and be in campaign mode throughout the year while committing rampant offences, the ED said. Politicians can claim no special status higher than that of an ordinary citizen, it added.

## India's ties with Maldives of great value: Jaishankar

Kalid Bhattacharjee  
NEW DELHI

India's relations with Maldives rest on the twin important pillars of "mutual interest" and "reciprocal sensitivity", said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Thursday. The remarks came during his interaction with the visiting Foreign Minister of Maldives, Moosa Zameer, when South Block officials also confirmed that "competent Indian technicians" have reached Maldives to look after the aviation platform that India maintained in the archipelago nation for humanitarian purposes.

"The world is today passing through a volatile and uncertain period. In such times, as we refocus on COVID, natural disasters and economic difficulties like India's first woman elephant mahout Parbati Baruah, who is known as 'Elezi Kanyas',

## Taliban are trying to install their nominees in India, cautions Afghan diplomat

Subasini Haidar  
NEW YORK

Days after Afghanistan's most senior diplomat in India resigned over charges of smuggling, diplomats attuned to the previous democratic regime in Kabul warn that the Taliban interaction with another attempt to install a nominee in India, and urged India, and other countries not to "normalise" ties with the Taliban. "The Taliban are trying to install a nominee in India, and urged India, and other countries not to 'normalise' ties with the Taliban," said the diplomat. "The Taliban are trying to install a nominee in India, and urged India, and other countries not to 'normalise' ties with the Taliban," said the diplomat. "The Taliban are trying to install a nominee in India, and urged India, and other countries not to 'normalise' ties with the Taliban," said the diplomat.

## Findings of EAC-PM working paper being misrepresented, says think tank

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Population Foundation of India (PFI) on Thursday night expressed deep concern about media reports misrepresenting the findings of a working paper on population trends and reproductive health in 167 countries, including India.

The PFI, an independent think tank working on population trends and reproductive health, said that media outlets have misrepresented the findings contained in the working paper "to spread alarm" regarding the growth of the Muslim population. "Such interpretations are not only inaccurate but also misleading and baseless," it said.

In the working paper titled "Share of religious minorities: a cross-country analysis (1950-2015)" published on May 7, the EAC-PM examines the shares of Muslims in the population of 167 countries. The paper said that for India, while the share in population of Muslims increased by 3.48% in this period, the share in population of Hindus decreased by 7.82%, adding that in 1950, Hindus' share in population was 81.68%, which came down to 78.06% in 2015. Similarly, Muslims' share had risen from 9.84% to 14.09%.

The 2011 Census had counted 96.63 crore Hindus, 79.8% of the population, and 17.22 crore Muslims, 14.2% of the population, at the time.

The working paper has expressed the difference in populations between 1950 and 2015 as a percentage of the population of those birth rates compared to India. These countries have achieved this through higher levels of population education, greater employment opportunities, and better access to contraceptive choices. This clearly shows that fertility decline is influenced by development, not by religious affiliation.

"The media's selective portrayal of the findings is an example of misrepresentation that ignores broader demographic trends," the PFI statement said. "The PFI has no intention to apply the same calculations, it would show that Buddhist population has increased by 1,52,09% when in fact their share had increased from 0.08% to 0.81% in the total population and 17.22 crore Muslims, 14.2% of the population, at the time. "Successful family planning programmes in

## SC stops grant of fresh mining leases in the Aravalli range

Krishnadhas Rajagopal  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday stopped the grant of fresh mining leases and renewals in what is known as the Aravalli range (AR) report, constitute the Aravalli ranges and hills. The FSI report defined the Aravalli range as a buffer zone around a uniform 100-metre-wide buffer zone around the down-slope of the hills.

"Until further orders, though all States wherein the Aravalli ranges are situated will be at liberty to continue the process applications for grant of mining leases and renewals of mining leases and renewals shall be granted for mining in the Aravalli hills and ranges as defined in the FSI report," a Special Bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and A.S. Oka directed.

The court said its order should not be construed as a ban on legal mining activities carried out through valid permits and licences.

"In our experience, a total ban on mining is not conducive even to the interest of the environment in as much as it gives scope for illegal mining," the Bench observed.

The order covers Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana and Gujarat — the four States where the Aravalli ranges are situated. On a request by Rajasthan and Haryana that the order may affect sand mining activities, the Bench said its directions would be restricted to the Aravalli hills and ranges. "But there is no sand in the hills," Justice Gavai said with a smile to Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor-General K.M. Narain, appearing for Haryana and Rajasthan, respectively. The prohibition on fresh mining leases and renewals would extend to statutory clearances by the various authorities.

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## Taliban are trying to install their nominees in India, cautions Afghan diplomat

Subasini Haidar  
NEW YORK

Days after Afghanistan's most senior diplomat in India resigned over charges of smuggling, diplomats attuned to the previous democratic regime in Kabul warn that the Taliban interaction with another attempt to install a nominee in India, and urged India, and other countries not to "normalise" ties with the Taliban. "The Taliban are trying to install a nominee in India, and urged India, and other countries not to 'normalise' ties with the Taliban," said the diplomat. "The Taliban are trying to install a nominee in India, and urged India, and other countries not to 'normalise' ties with the Taliban," said the diplomat.

## Findings of EAC-PM working paper being misrepresented, says think tank

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Population Foundation of India (PFI) on Thursday night expressed deep concern about media reports misrepresenting the findings of a working paper on population trends and reproductive health in 167 countries, including India.

The PFI, an independent think tank working on population trends and reproductive health, said that media outlets have misrepresented the findings contained in the working paper "to spread alarm" regarding the growth of the Muslim population. "Such interpretations are not only inaccurate but also misleading and baseless," it said.

In the working paper titled "Share of religious minorities: a cross-country analysis (1950-2015)" published on May 7, the EAC-PM examines the shares of Muslims in the population of 167 countries. The paper said that for India, while the share in population of Muslims increased by 3.48% in this period, the share in population of Hindus decreased by 7.82%, adding that in 1950, Hindus' share in population was 81.68%, which came down to 78.06% in 2015. Similarly, Muslims' share had risen from 9.84% to 14.09%.

The 2011 Census had counted 96.63 crore Hindus, 79.8% of the population, and 17.22 crore Muslims, 14.2% of the population, at the time.

The working paper has expressed the difference in populations between 1950 and 2015 as a percentage of the population of those birth rates compared to India. These countries have achieved this through higher levels of population education, greater employment opportunities, and better access to contraceptive choices. This clearly shows that fertility decline is influenced by development, not by religious affiliation.

"The media's selective portrayal of the findings is an example of misrepresentation that ignores broader demographic trends," the PFI statement said. "The PFI has no intention to apply the same calculations, it would show that Buddhist population has increased by 1,52,09% when in fact their share had increased from 0.08% to 0.81% in the total population and 17.22 crore Muslims, 14.2% of the population, at the time. "Successful family planning programmes in

# Hindu population in India shrunk by 8 per cent; Muslims and Christians grew by 43 and 5 per cent respectively in 65 years: PM's Economic Council



*PM's EAC reveals in a report on global trend of the demographic shift: Details (Representational Image created by OpIndia staff by Bing AI)*

# Religious Demographic Changes

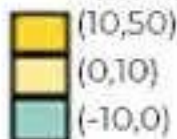


1950 to 2015

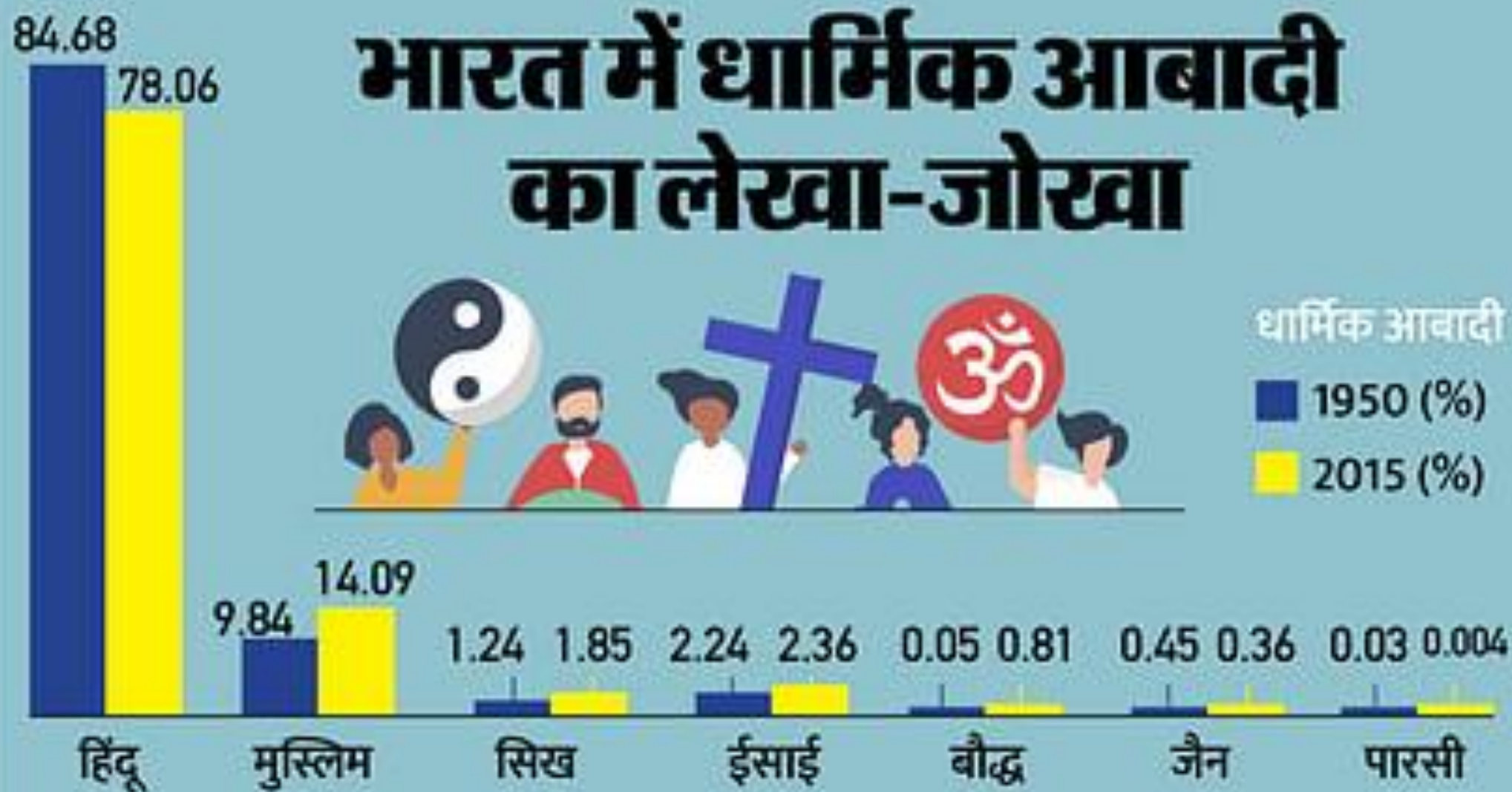
Country	Rate of change in share
Myanmar	-9.84
India	-7.82
Nepal	-3.61
Maldives	-1.47
Afghanistan	0.29
Pakistan	3.75
Sri Lanka	5.25
Bhutan	17.67
Bangladesh	18.55



Rate of change in share of the majority



# भारत में धार्मिक आबादी का लेखा-जोखा



# Findings of EAC-PM working paper being misreported, says think tank

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Population Foundation of India (PFI) on Thursday night expressed deep concern about media reports misrepresenting the data set put out by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) in a recently published working paper on the share of religious minorities in 167 countries, including India.

The PFI, an independent think tank working on population trends and reproductive/sexual health, said that media outlets were misreporting the findings contained in the working paper “to spread alarm regarding the growth of the Muslim population”. “Such interpretations are not only inaccurate but also misleading and baseless,” it said.

In the working paper titled “Share of religious minorities: a cross-country analysis (1950-2015)” pu-

**Successive Censuses have shown that growth rate of Muslims is on the decline, the PFI said**

blished on May 7, the EAC-PM examines the shares of majority and minority religious communities in populations of 167 countries, including India.

The paper said that for India, while the share in population of Muslims increased by 43.15% in this time period, the share in population of Hindus decreased by 7.82%, adding that in 1950, Hindus’ share in population was 84.68%, which came down to 78.06% in 2015. Similarly, Muslims’ share had risen from 9.84% to 14.09%.

The 2011 Census had counted 96.63 crore Hindus, 79.8% of the population and 17.22 crore Muslims, 14.2% of the population, at the time.

The working paper has expressed the difference in

populations between 1950 and 2015 as a percentage of the population of those respective religious groups in 1950. As a result, the Muslim community’s difference in share of population, which is a rise of 4.25 percentage points, is being expressed as a “43.15% increase” compared to the Muslim population as of 1950. Using this method, the paper has concluded that Hindus’ share declined by 7.82%, Christians’ rose by 5.38%, Sikhs’ went up by 6.58%, and that of Parsis went down by 85%.

It has not used this presentation of data for Buddhists and Jains. If one were to apply the same calculations, it would show the Buddhist population had increased by 1,520% when in fact their share had increased from 0.05% to 0.81% in the total population.

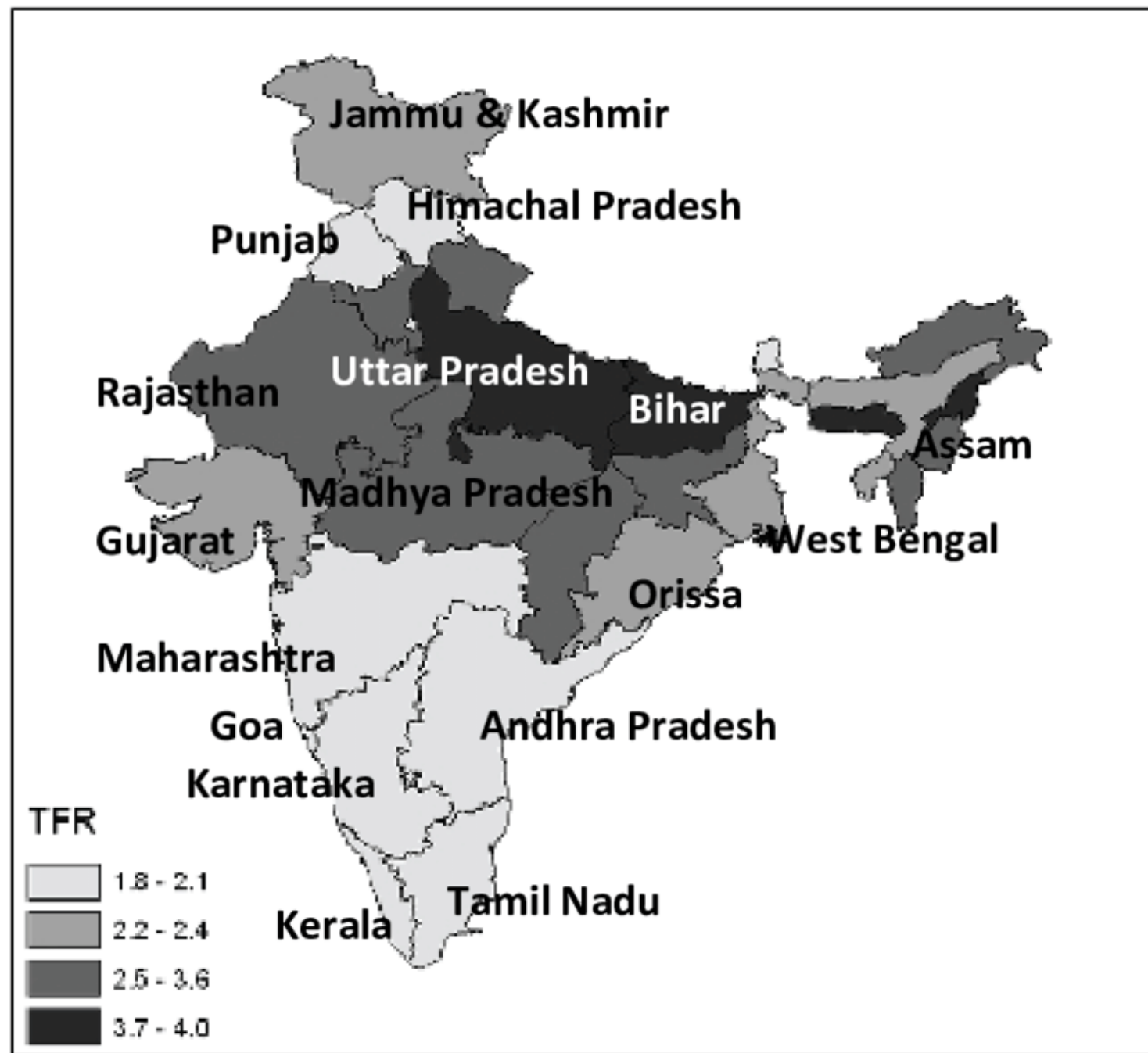
Meanwhile, the PFI pointed out in its statement, “Successful family planning programmes in

Muslim-majority countries like Bangladesh and Indonesia have resulted in lower birth rates compared to India. These countries have achieved this through higher levels of female education, greater employment opportunities, and better access to contraceptive choices. This clearly shows that fertility decline is influenced by development factors rather than religious affiliation.”

“The media’s selective portrayal of data is an example of misrepresentation that ignores broader demographic trends,” the PFI statement said.

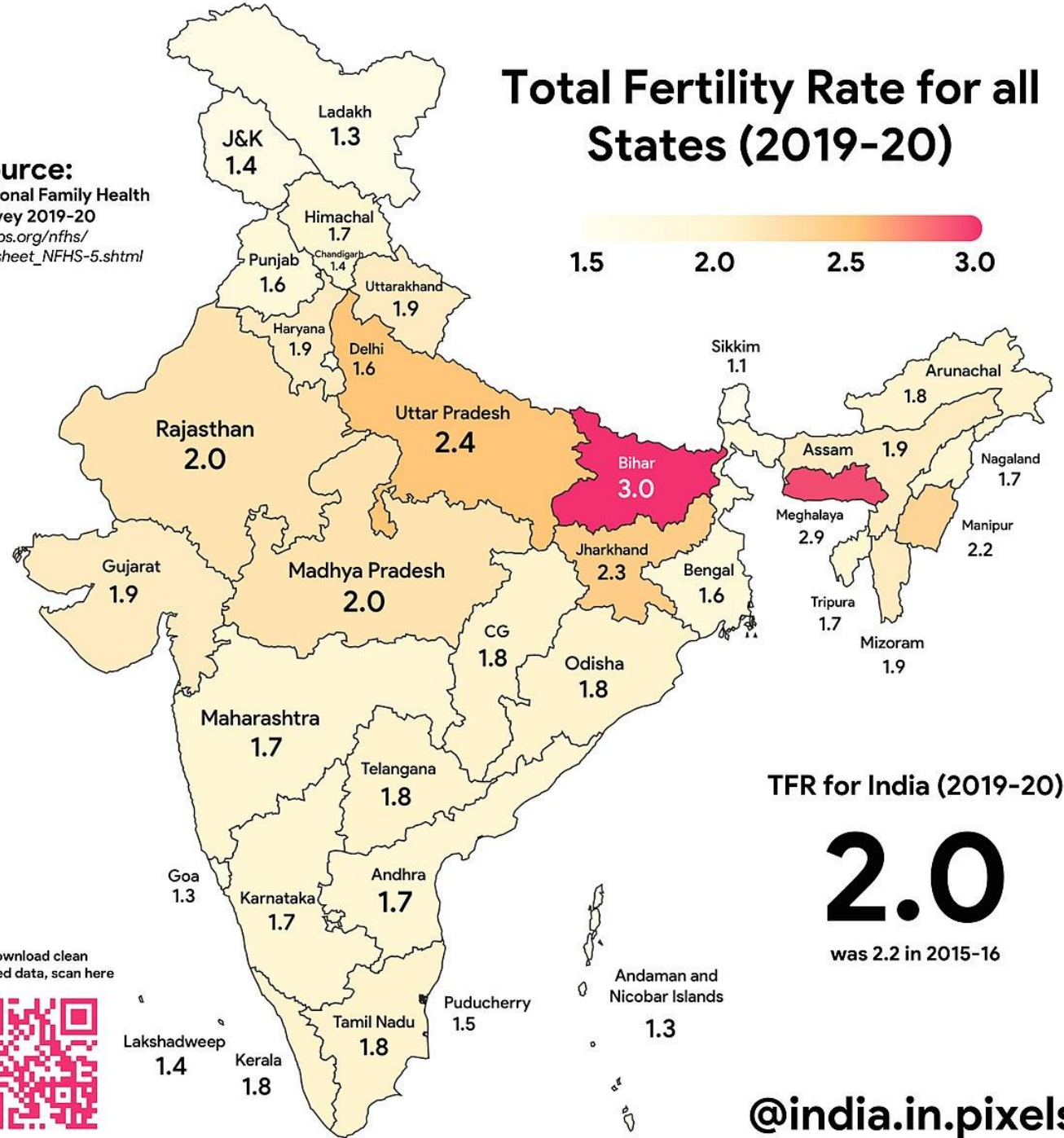
The PFI added that successive Censuses have shown that the decadal growth rate of Muslims has been on the decline for three decades now. It also noted that National Family Health Surveys had also shown that the total fertility rate (TFR) in India was declining, with the largest decline being seen amongst Muslims.

- 
- In India, the decadal growth rate for Muslims has been declining over the past 30 years, from 32.9% in 1981-1991 to 24.6% in 2001-2011. This decline is more pronounced than that of Hindus, whose growth rate fell from 22.7% to 16.8% over the same period.



# Total Fertility Rate for all States (2019-20)

Source:  
National Family Health Survey 2019-20  
[rchiips.org/nfhs/factsheet\\_NFHS-5.shtml](https://rchiips.org/nfhs/factsheet_NFHS-5.shtml)



TFR for India (2019-20)

# 2.0

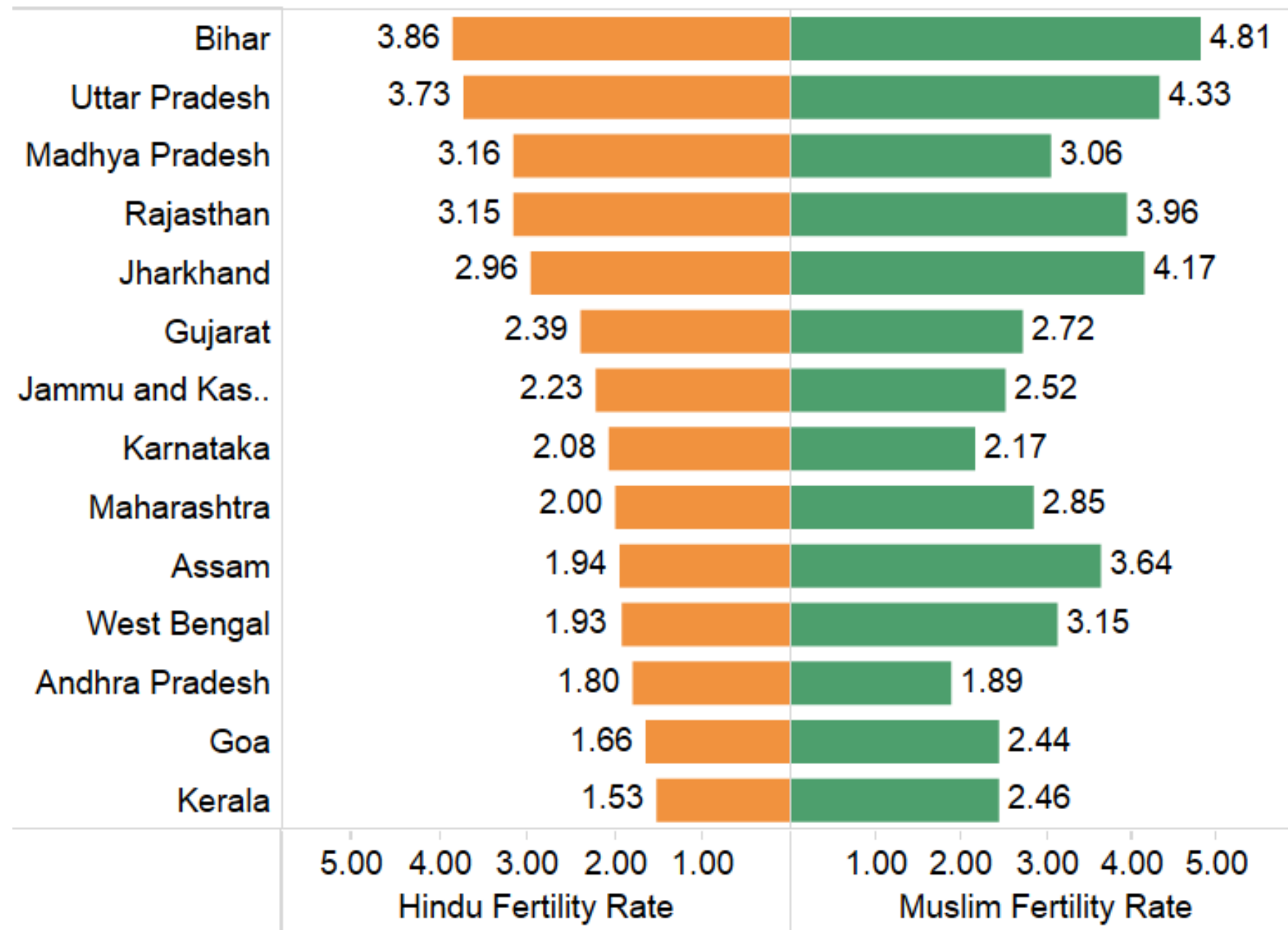
was 2.2 in 2015-16

To download clean parsed data, scan here



@india.in.pixels

# Hindu v/s Muslim Fertility Rate, By State



**NOTE:** We have included only the two biggest religious groups in the country for comparisons; Data for other states are not available.

# Next & Next

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

**Decrease in equity mutual funds inflow in April**

**16** percent. Equity mutual funds attracted a net inflow of ₹17 crore in April, according to the Association of Mutual Funds in India. PHOTO: SHANTANU DEB

**Number of countries to witness rise in exports from India**

**115** India's exports have increased to more than 100 countries during 2023-24 despite the economic uncertainties. PHOTO: SHANTANU DEB

**Share of children to not receive measles vaccine in India**

**12** percent. Children receiving none of the double-dose, signals a "concerning gap" in immunisation coverage. PHOTO: SHANTANU DEB

**Share of disease burden in India due to unhealthy diet**

**56.4** percent. Indian Council of Medical Research released 17 dietary guidelines to prevent diseases. PHOTO: SHANTANU DEB

**Number of flights cancelled by Air India Express**

**85** Air India Express cancelled 23% of the total daily capacity as the cabin crew shortage continued for the third day. PHOTO: SHANTANU DEB

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## Reservation within Constitutional bounds

How does the inclusion of Muslims in the OBC quota align with the Constitution's aim of social justice? Should India consider lifting the 50% cap on reservations to ensure fair representation for communities? Is it time for India to extend reservation benefits to Dalit Christians and Muslims to address historic discrimination?

### LETTER AND SPIRIT

Rangarajan R.

#### The story so far:

Political angst has emerged over the reservation issues with the BJP making outlandish remarks about the Congress' demand for caste census by linking it to equities. The Opposition, meanwhile, had raised concern over the BJP's position on reservation, as the latter's explicit denial of any change in policy.

**Constitution and affirmative action** The Constitution aims to secure social justice while guaranteeing equality as a fundamental right. Articles 15 and 16 guarantee equality to all citizens in any action by the state (including admissions to educational institutions) and public employment respectively. To achieve social justice, they also enable the state to make special provisions for the advancement of OBC, SC and ST. OBC is a collective term to classify socially and educationally backward castes. Many States also classify certain castes as the Most Backward Classes (MBC). The reservation percentages vary from State to State.

In the *Indira Sawhney case* (1992), the Supreme Court upheld the 27% reservation for OBC. It opined that caste is a determinant of class in the Indian context and backwardness cannot be determined solely on economic criteria. However, to uphold the basic structure of equality, it fixed a cap of 50% for reservations unless there were exceptional circumstances. The reservation of OBC (27%), SC (15%) and ST (7.5%) resulted in a total reservation of 49.5%. The court also provided for excluding the creamy layer from OBC with an income limit currently at ₹8 lakhs per annum. Children of parents, either of whom entered the government service (Centre or State) as Group A/Class I officers and children of parents, both of whom entered as Group B/C class II officers are also included. In the *Janhit Abhiyan case* (2022), the court by a majority of 3-2 upheld the constitutional validity of the EWS reservation. It held that economic criteria could be a basis for reservation.

**Affirmative action elsewhere** In the U.S., there is 'affirmative action'

### Changes overview

A brief summary of important developments with respect to reservations at the central level



Year	Key development
1950 & 1951	Commencement of Constitution and First Amendment - Enabling provisions in Articles 15 and 16 to make special provisions for advancement of OBC, SC and ST
1982	Reservation for SC and ST fixed at 15% and 7.5% respectively, in central educational institutions and public sector undertakings
1990	27% reservation for OBC in central government employment introduced based on the recommendation of the Mandal Commission
2005	93rd Constitutional amendment (Article 15(5)) that enabled reservation for OBC, SC and ST in educational institutions including private institutions
2019	103rd Constitutional amendment (Articles 15(6) and 16(1)) that enabled up to 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among the unreserved category in educational institutions and public employment

that consists of government-approved and voluntary private programs granting special consideration to racial minorities like African-American and Latin-American. In *Fair admissions vs Harvard case* (2023), the U.S. Supreme Court, however, ruled that race-based affirmative action programs in college admissions violate the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution. In the U.K., the law enables voluntary 'positive action' which allows employers to combat under-representation of disadvantaged groups. France does not have any affirmative action based on race or ethnicity. It provides educational measures designed to increase opportunities for low-income students.

#### Current debate

The Constituent assembly that framed our constitution was against reservation solely based on religion. The Constitution guarantees equality and prohibits discrimination only based on religion under Articles 15 and 16. The inclusion of all Muslim communities within the OBC

quota in Karnataka forms the basis for the BJP's campaign at present. However, it is special consideration to that sub-categorisation for Muslims within the OBC quota has been present in Karnataka since 1995. The four per cent sub-categorisation for Muslims introduced in 1995 by the H. D. Deve Gowda-led government was removed by the previous government led by Basavaraj Bommai. This was redistributed amongst the OBC in the Hindu community. However, after observation by the court in the case challenging this order, the *status quo* continues. Muslim and Christian communities who are socially and educationally backward are provided reservations under the OBC/MBC category. There is also sub-categorisation within the OBC/MBC quota for Muslim communities in States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. This is because the term used in the Constitution is 'socially and educationally backward classes' and could encompass backward communities from all religions. It is only for being a member of a SC. The

Constitution (Scheduled Castes) order, 1950' specifies that the person should profess only Hinduism, Sikhism or Buddhism. There is no such requirement for being a member of a ST.

The Congress, meanwhile, in its manifesto has promised that they would work towards removing the 50% cap placed on reservations.

#### The way forward

Reservation is affirmative action meant to balance the historical discrimination against OBC, SC and ST communities. Rohini Commission was set up to provide recommendations on sub-categorisation amongst OBC castes. Though the findings of the report are yet to be made public, it has been estimated that 97% of reserved jobs and seats in educational institutions have been garnered by just around 25% of the OBC castes/sub-castes at the central level. Close to 1,000 of around 2,600 communities under the OBC category had zero representation in jobs and educational institutes. While sub-categorisation has been implemented in 11 different States, it has not been carried out at the central level. A similar issue of concentration of reservation benefits persists in the SC and ST categories. There is no exclusion based on the 'creamy layer' for these communities. The Dalit Christians and Muslims also suffer from considerable discrimination and lack of opportunities. The government has constituted a commission headed by former CJI K. G. Balakrishnan to study the question of extending SC reservation to Dalits who have converted to religions other than Sikhism and Buddhism.

Increasing the reservation limit beyond 50%, sub-categorisation among reserved categories, introducing appropriate creamy layers for SC and ST, and extending SC reservations to Dalit Christians and Muslims are matters that are sensitive with their set of pros and cons. There must be effort nevertheless to deliberate on these matters and frame suitable policies such that the benefits of reservation progressively reach the extremely marginalised sections. The aim should be towards the continuous pursuit of social justice while maintaining a harmonious balance with equality guaranteed in the Constitution.

(Rangarajan R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Policy Simplified'. Views expressed are personal)

### THE GIST

Articles 15 and 16 of the Indian Constitution guarantee equality and provide for special provisions for the advancement of OBC, SC, and ST communities. The Supreme Court has upheld reservations for these communities, setting a cap of 50% unless under exceptional circumstances.

There's a debate over the inclusion of Muslims in the OBC quota in Karnataka. While some argue it's in line with the Constitution's aim of social justice, others oppose it, citing historical opposition to reservation solely based on religion.

Suggestions include sub-categorisation within reserved categories, addressing the concentration of reservation benefits, extending reservation to Dalit Christians and Muslims, and deliberating on increasing the reservation limit beyond 50%. These measures aim to ensure social justice while maintaining equality as guaranteed in the Constitution.

## Why did Interpol issue a blue corner notice against Prajwal?

How is a blue corner Interpol notice different from a red corner notice? What does it mean for the SIT probe in the Prajwal Revanna sexual assault case? How does Interpol alert member countries about fugitives?

Sunanda.

#### The story so far:

A mid a political storm in Karnataka over grave allegations of sexual abuse against Prajwal Revanna, sitting Hassan MP and grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, the International Criminal Police Organisation, commonly known as Interpol, has issued a blue corner notice against the absconding politician. The MP has been on the run since late last month following the leak of thousands of explicit video clips that allegedly show the 33-year-old sexually abusing multiple women, prompting the JD(S) to suspend him.

**How does the Interpol alert countries?** The Interpol is an inter-governmental law

enforcement organisation which assists and facilitates cooperation between national law forces in 196 member countries to combat transnational crimes. The organisation shares information regarding crimes and wanted criminals globally, and provides technical, operational, and investigative support to locate fugitives.

It maintains a database of critical data about wanted criminals, which member countries can use to trace such individuals.

The agency has a National Central Bureau in all member countries which is a single point of contact between law enforcement agencies of that country and Interpol.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is officially designated as the nodal agency for India.

The agency uses

a 'colour-coded' system to alert and share information on criminal activities between member countries and global organisations. Notably, member countries are not bound by international law to abide by Interpol notices as they are entirely discretionary.

**Why did Interpol issue a blue corner notice against Prajwal Revanna?** The international organisation issues a blue corner notice when the case is related to missing persons. Also called an "enquiry notice", such an alert is sent for additional information from member states about a person, to verify their identity, location, or criminal record concerning a criminal investigation.

It is different from a red corner notice, considering that the purpose of a blue notice is information about a person of interest in an investigation, while the

former is generally issued against a person wanted for extradition, or serve a sentence based on a court decision, or a similar lawful action.

Interpol issued a blue corner notice against Mr. Revanna after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by the Karnataka government sought the help of the CBI for further inquiry.

The SIT first issued a look out circular against the Hassan MP after he failed to appear before the panel.

The request came days after the requests for criminal records. As per reports, the MP left for Munich, Germany using his diplomatic passport a day after his constituency went to the polls in the second phase of the Lok Sabha elections on April 26, and hours before the SIT was formed.

Mr. Revanna's advocate sought seven notices against Prajwal Revanna before the panel.

The investigating team, however, ruled out the possibility of issuing a blue corner alert against Mr. Revanna, as the investigation is in the early stages and the police are yet to file criminal charges.

The SIT officials told Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that they intend to consider that the purpose of a blue notice is information about his whereabouts.

### THE GIST

Prajwal Revanna, sitting MP and grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, is accused of sexual abuse, prompting his suspension from JD(S).

Interpol has issued a blue corner notice against him. Blue corner notices are issued for missing persons to gather information about their identity, location, or criminal record for ongoing investigations.

The Special Investigation Team formed by the Karnataka government sought CBI's help in the case, leading to the issuance of the blue corner notice.

• 5

# Share of disease burden in India due to unhealthy diet

**56.4** percent. Indian Council of Medical Research released 17 dietary guidelines to prevent diseases. PTI

**ANONNA DUTT**

NEW DELHI, MAY 9

WITH NONCOMMUNICABLE diseases (NCDs) – cardiovascular disease, cancers, diabetes, etc. – rising, and affecting adolescents and even children, India’s premier nutrition research institute has published comprehensive guidelines on the diet of vulnerable groups, including pregnant and lactating women, and children and the elderly.

The guidelines issued by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad, which works under the Indian Council of Medical Research

(ICMR), also prescribe general principles such as reducing consumption of salt and highly processed foods (such as packaged chips, cookies, bread, ketchup, candy, etc.).

The guidelines say an estimated 56.4% of India’s total disease burden can be attributed to unhealthy diets. A healthy diet and phys-

ical activity can prevent 80% of Type 2 diabetes cases, and significantly reduce the burden of heart disease and high blood pressure.

### Focus on children, mothers

Optimal nutrition for mother and child from conception till the age of 2 years is linked to proper growth and development. It can prevent all forms of undernutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies, and obesity.

The report quotes the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey 2019, which showed

high prevalence of lifestyle conditions even in children. Around 5% of children of ages 5-9, and 6% of adolescents, were overweight or obese, almost 2% of children

and adolescents were found to have diabetes, and another 10% had pre-diabetes.

The survey found high levels of bad cholesterol (LDL and triglycerides) in 37.3% of children ages 5-9, and 19.9% of pre-teens and teens ages 10-19. Levels of good cholesterol were low in a fourth of all children and adolescents.

## EXPLAINED HEALTH

## YOUNG & UNHEALTHY

	1-4 yrs	5-9 yrs	10-19 yrs
<b>DISEASES OF OVERNUTRITION (%)</b>			
Overweight		3.7	4.9
Obesity		1.3	1.1
Pre-diabetes		10.3	10.4
Diabetes		1.2	0.6
Hypertension			4.9
High total cholesterol		3.2	3.7
<b>DISEASES OF UNDERNUTRITION (%)</b>			
Anaemia	40.6	23.5	28.4
<b>MICRONUTRIENT DEFICIENCIES (%)</b>			
Iron	32.1	17.0	21.5
Vitamin D	13.7	18.2	23.9
Vitamin A	17.5	21.5	15.6
Vitamin B12	13.8	17.2	30.9
Zinc	19.0	16.8	31.7

Source: ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition  
Report on Dietary Guidelines for Indians

## Dual nutrition challenge

Incidence of micronutrient (zinc, iron, vitamins) deficiencies ranged from 13% to 30% of children between ages 1 and 19. The recommended ideal diet charts for various groups of people takes into account both micronutrient deficiencies and diseases of overnutrition.

While severe forms of undernutrition such as marasmus (a deficiency of macronutrients such as carbohydrates and proteins) and kwashiorkor (deficiency of proteins) have disappeared from the country, manifestations such as anaemia continue, the report says. It puts the prevalence of anaemia at 40.6%, 23.5%, and 28.4% in children under age 5, ages 5-9, and 10-19 respectively.

A study on malnutrition published in *The Lancet* earlier this year said undernutrition continues to be high in India, but obesity has increased significantly over the last 30 years.

The “faulty dietary pattern” in which unhealthy, highly processed, high-fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) foods have become more affordable and accessible than healthier alterna-

tives, “contributes to deficiencies in iron and folic acid, resulting in anaemia and in the higher prevalence of overweight and obesity among population groups,” the report says.

## General dietary principles

The guidelines recommend getting required nutrients from at least eight food groups, including vegetables, leafy vegetables, roots and tubers, dairy, nuts, and oils. Consumption of cereals — the staple of Indian meals — should be restricted, so they contribute only 45% of the total energy (instead of the 50-70% now). Instead, more proteins (pulses, meat, poultry, fish) should be consumed, making up 14% of the total daily energy (instead of only 6-9% now).

Achieving adequate levels of essential polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) and B12 is a challenge for vegetarians. The guidelines recommend consumption of flax seeds, chia seeds, walnuts, vegetables, and greens.

The report says salt consumption should be restricted to 5g a day, and strongly recom-

mends against consuming highly processed foods that are typically high in fats, salt, sugar.

## Group-specific guidelines

**PREGNANT WOMEN:** Small frequent meals for those experiencing nausea and vomiting. The guidelines recommend consumption of lots of fruit and vegetables, especially those high in iron and folate content.

**INFANTS AND CHILDREN:** For the first six months, infants should only be breastfed, and must not be given honey, glucose, or diluted milk. There is no need to give water, even during hot months. After age 6 months, complementary foods must be included.

**ELDERLY:** The elderly should consume foods rich in proteins, calcium, micronutrients, and fibre. Apart from pulses and cereals — with at least one-third as whole grains — at least 200-400 ml of low-fat milk or milk products, a fist full of nuts and oilseeds, and 400-500g of vegetables and fruit should be consumed. Exercise is important in order to maintain bone density and muscle mass.

# Why did Interpol issue a blue corner notice against Prajwal?

How is a blue corner Interpol notice different from a red corner notice? What does it mean for the SIT probe in the Prajwal Revanna sexual assault case? How does Interpol alert member countries about fugitives?

## Sumeda

### The story so far:

**A**mid a political storm in Karnataka over grave allegations of sexual abuse against Prajwal Revanna, sitting Hassan MP and grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, the International Criminal Police Organisation, commonly known as Interpol, has issued a blue corner notice against the absconding politician. The MP has been on the run since late last month following the leak of thousands of explicit video clips that allegedly show the 33-year-old sexually abusing multiple women, prompting the JD(S) to suspend him.

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Interpol issued a blue corner notice against Mr. Revanna after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by the Karnataka government sought the help of the CBI for further inquiry.

The SIT first issued a look out circular against the Hassan MP after he failed to appear before the panel.

The request came days after the Hassan MP remained untraceable. As per reports, the MP left for Munich, Germany using his diplomatic passport a day after his constituency went to the polls in the second phase of the Lok Sabha elections on April 26, and hours before the SIT was constituted.

Mr. Revanna's advocate sought seven days for his client to present himself before the panel.

The investigating team, however, ruled out the possibility and moved for a blue corner alert against Mr. Revanna, considering that the investigation is in the early stages and the police are yet to file criminal charges.

The SIT officials told Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that they intend to arrest the accused to expedite the investigation as soon as they receive information about his whereabouts.

## THE GIST

▼  
Prajwal Revanna, sitting MP and grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, is accused of sexual abuse, prompting his suspension from JD(S).

▼  
Interpol has issued a blue corner notice against him. Blue corner notices are issued for missing persons to gather information about their identity, location, or criminal record for ongoing investigations.

▼  
The Special Investigation Team formed by the Karnataka government sought CBI's help in the case, leading to the issuance of the blue corner notice.

# INTERPOL NOTICES



**RED NOTICE**  
WANTED PERSONS



**GREEN NOTICE**  
WARNINGS AND INTELLIGENCE



**YELLOW NOTICE**  
MISSING PERSONS



**ORANGE NOTICE**  
IMMINENT THREAT



**BLUE NOTICE**  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



**PURPLE NOTICE**  
MODUS OPERANDI



**BLACK NOTICE**  
UNIDENTIFIED BODIES



**INTERPOL-UN SECURITY  
COUNCIL SPECIAL NOTICE**  
GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS SUBJECT TO  
UNSC SANCTIONS

BEIRUT

Four Hezbollah members killed in Israeli strike, says Lebanese source



A Lebanese security source, requesting anonymity, said that four Hezbollah members were killed in an Israeli strike on a vehicle in the country's south. Hezbollah did not immediately comment on the incident. Meanwhile, the Israeli Army said, "We do not comment on reports in the foreign media."

LONDON

U.K. girl's hearing restored after groundbreaking gene therapy



An 18-month-old British girl, Opal, who was born without hearing, is believed to be the youngest person to have their hearing restored after undergoing groundbreaking new gene therapy developed by U.S. biotech firm Regeneron. Ear surgeon Manohar Bance called the results close to normal hearing restoration.

BUDAPEST

China's Xi in Hungary to celebrate 'new journey' with closest EU ally



Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Hungary on Thursday seeking a "new journey" with Beijing's closest European Union ally amid divisions with the West. According to the Hungarian government, the two countries are expected to sign at least 16 different agreements promoting their cooperation.

DAKAR

11 injured as Boeing plane leaves runway in Senegal; airport closed



A Boeing plane came off the runway during takeoff in Senegal early on Thursday, injuring 11 people and forcing the international airport near the capital Dakar to close, its management said. The B737/300 aircraft was carrying 78 passengers and headed for the Malian capital Bamako, the airport's managers IAS said.

Trump accuses Biden of siding with Hamas on weapons supply to Israel

Former President called his election rival's stance 'disgraceful' under increasing pressure to limit arms shipments from other leading Republicans and rest of his own party. Biden paused delivery of 1,800 907-kg bombs and 1,700 225-kg bombs

Agence France-Presse NEW YORK

Donald Trump accused election rival Joe Biden on Thursday of siding with Hamas when he threatened to stop sending U.S. weapons to Israel as it wages war against the Palestinian militant group in Gaza, calling the President's stance "disgraceful". Mr. Biden warned on Wednesday of halting weapons supplies if Israel pushes ahead with its long-threatened Rafah ground offensive, his most direct warning yet to the pro-Israelian impact of the war. "Crooked Joe is taking the side of these terrorists, just like he has sided with the Radical Mob taking ov-



Differing stances: Donald Trump appears before the start of his criminal trial at New York State Supreme Court on May 6. REUTERS

er our college campuses." Mr. Trump posted on his Truth social network, "what Biden is doing with respect against the war that have spread across U.S. universities." Speaking later to presspersons outside the cour-

Republican presidential nominee who will face off against Democrat Biden in the November election. Leading Republicans have also weighed in against Mr. Biden. "I cannot claim his support for Israel is 'ironclad' while denying Israel precisely the weapons it needs to defend itself," Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said on X.

Under increasing pressure from the left of his own party to limit arms shipments, Mr. Biden paused delivery last week of 1,800 907-kg bombs and 1,700 225-kg bombs. His administration has also previously taken Israel and not only can't believe it," said the former President and presumptive

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On Victory Day, Putin says nuclear forces are on alert

Agence France-Presse MOSCOW

President Vladimir Putin on Thursday warned his nuclear forces were "always" on alert, and added that Moscow would not tolerate any Western threats, during an address on the annual Victory Day parade.

In a defiant speech on Red Square before thousands of soldiers dressed in ceremonial attire, Mr. Putin heaped praise on his Army fighting in Ukraine and accused "Western spies" of fomenting conflicts around the world.

"Russia will do everything to prevent a global clash, but at the same time we will not allow anyone to threaten us. Our strategic forces are always on alert," Mr. Putin told the crowd. "Dear friends, Russia is now going through a diffi-



Vladimir Putin

cut, crucial period. The fate of the Motherland, its future depends on each of us."

The May 9 parade marks the Soviet Union's defeat of Nazi Germany in the Second World War and has become Russia's most important public holiday as Mr. Putin puts the country firmly on a combat footing.

Mr. Putin has used nuclear rhetoric throughout the conflict but has increasingly belligerent since last year, pulling out

of a nuclear test ban treaty and a key arms reduction agreement with the United States.

Earlier this week, he ordered the Russian military to hold nuclear drills involving the Navy and troops based near Ukraine, raising fears he could use the powerful weapons on the battlefield.

In comments recorded on Tuesday but released by the Kremlin after the parade, Mr. Putin vowed to modernise his Army's weaponry and said Russia would use whatever foreign parts it could get to make them.

Mr. Putin has repeatedly framed the current fight against Ukraine as an existential battle against "Nazism" in a message he reiterated in his address Thursday.

Argentina's Milei faces 2nd general strike in 5 months

Agence France-Presse BUENOS AIRES

Argentina's President Javier Milei faced his second general strike on Thursday in just five months in of- fense, as workers angered by austerity cuts brought the capital to a standstill.

Public transport in Buenos Aires was reduced to a trickle for some three million daily by the strike, while schools, banks and service stations remained closed, and garbage was left uncollected.

The 24-hour protest was called by labour unions in support of "a dignified wage" for Argentines battling a severe economic crisis, with annual inflation nearing 300% and poverty affecting one in two people.

Some 400 flights had to be cancelled, affecting about 70,000 passengers.



Javier Milei

according to the ALTA Latin American air transport association.

Paralysed exports The port of Rosario, which exports 80% of Argentina's agri-industrial produce, was all but paralysed in the midst of its busiest season.

Self-declared "anarcho-capitalist" Milei won elections last November vowing to reduce the Argentine deficit to zero.

To that end, he has instituted an austerity program that has seen the government slash subsidies for transport, fuel and energy, even as wage-earners lost a fifth of their purchasing power.

Thousands of public servants have lost their jobs. The CGT union, part of Thursday's strike call, accuses Mr. Milei of imposing "a brutal adjustment suffered especially by the lower-income sectors, the wage-earning middle class and pensioners".

Just weeks after taking office in December, Mr. Milei faced his first general strike.

Daring rescue

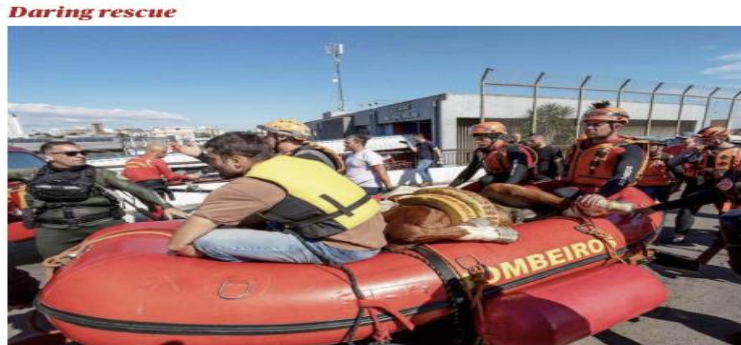
Agence France-Presse RIO DE JANEIRO

Firefighters and volunteers carrying a horse on a boat after rescuing it from the roof of a house in the flood-hit city of Canasvieiras in Rio Grande do Sul State of Brazil on Thursday. Some 400 municipalities have been affected by the worst natural calamity ever to hit the State. AFP

Recent polls showed Mr. Milei's popularity hovering between 45% and 50%, just short of his 56% of votes in his election win — a surprisingly high vote of confidence given the widespread unpopularity of his cost-saving measures.

China's third aircraft carrier, Fujian, has successfully completed its eight-day maiden sea trials, Fujian is an 80,000-tonne supercarrier with electromagnetic catapults for launching aircraft, making China the second country after the U.S. to field a supercarrier with this technology.

"During the sea trial, the aircraft carrier tested its propulsion, electrical systems, and other equipment, and achieved the expected results. In the next stage, People's Liberation Army Navy Ship (PLANS)



Firefighters and volunteers carrying a horse on a boat after rescuing it from the roof of a house in the flood-hit city of Canasvieiras in Rio Grande do Sul State of Brazil on Thursday. Some 400 municipalities have been affected by the worst natural calamity ever to hit the State. AFP

China's aircraft carrier Fujian completes 8-day sea trial

Dinakar Peri NEW DELHI

China's third aircraft carrier, Fujian, has successfully completed its eight-day maiden sea trials, Fujian is an 80,000-tonne supercarrier with electromagnetic catapults for launching aircraft, making China the second country after the U.S. to field a supercarrier with this technology.

"During the sea trial, the aircraft carrier tested its propulsion, electrical systems, and other equipment, and achieved the expected results. In the next stage, People's Liberation Army Navy Ship (PLANS)

Fujian will conduct follow-up tests according to established plans," according to China Military Online, the English language news website of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The aircraft carrier set sail for trials from Jiangnan shipyard in Shanghai on May 01.

The developments will be watched very closely by India and other countries in the region which are also planning to build aircraft carriers as Beijing rapidly expands its maritime power and presence.



Setting sail: China's third aircraft carrier, Fujian, conducts its maiden sea trial on May 01. AP

carrier was launched in June 2022. Last month, China announced that it is building its fourth aircraft carrier, likely a nuclear-powered supercarrier, to be unveiled very soon. Chi-

na's first aircraft carrier Liaoning was commissioned in 2012 and the second carrier Shandong was launched in 2017.

In an interview last week, outgoing Command-

er of Hawaii-based U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (IN-DOPACOM) Adm John Aquilino said that in the three years since he's been in command, China has built more than 400 aircraft, 20 major warships, and doubled its missile inventory.

Zelensky fires chief of protection after hit plot

Agence France-Presse KYIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday fired the head of the department responsible for his personal protection after two of its officers were detained this week over an alleged assassination plot.

Mr. Zelensky published a decree to "dismiss Sergiy Leonidovich Rud from the post of head of the State Protection Department of Ukraine".

It did not state a reason for Mr. Rud's removal or name a replacement to the highly sensitive position. The announcement came after Ukraine's SBi security service announced on Tuesday it had foiled a Russian plot to assassinate Mr. Zelensky.

Indian Navy's carriers Indian Navy currently operates two aircraft carriers — refurbished Russian carrier INS Vikramaditya, commissioned in 2013, and indigenously designed and built INS Vikrant, commissioned in September 2022.

In the second half of last year, the Indian Navy has moved the case for a second Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-II), a repeat of a Vikrant-like carrier which has been approved by the Defence Procurement Board last September. It is now awaiting approval by the Defence Acquisition Council, expected to be taken up after the elections.

Taliban warn against working with channel

Associated Press KABUL

Taliban on Thursday warned presspersons and experts against working with Afghanistan International TV. It's the first time they have told people not to cooperate with a specific outlet.

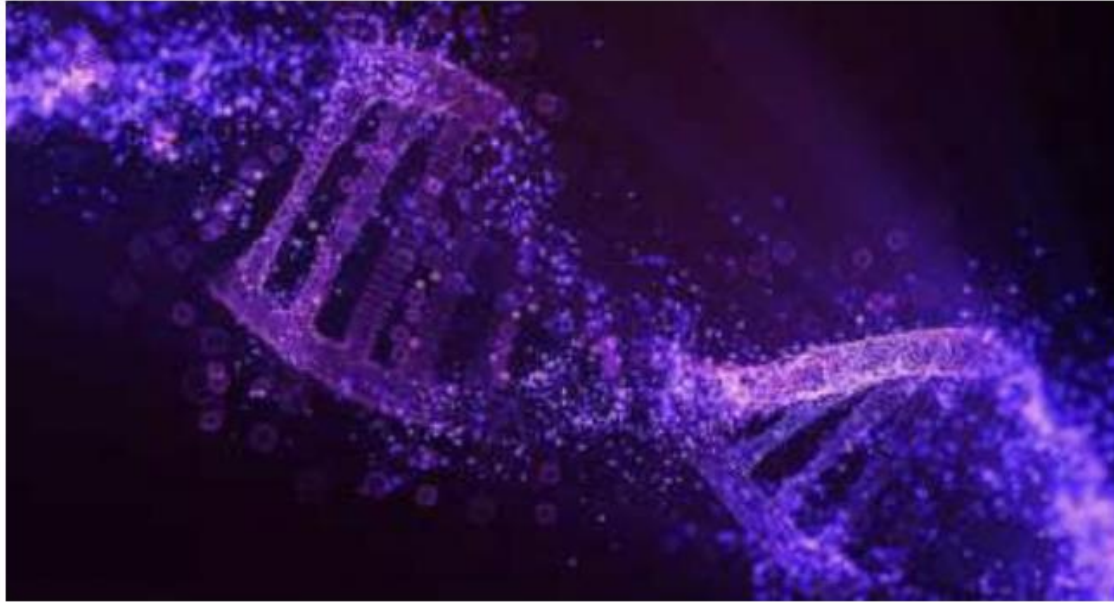
Afghanistan International TV, which is headquartered in London, is accessible through satellite, cable and social media. A spokesperson for the Taliban-controlled Ministry of Information and Culture alleged the station was

committing professional violations and violating legal boundaries. The Media Violations Commission scouted all journalists and experts in Afghanistan to cease their collaboration with the station, said ministry spokesperson Habib Ghofran.

The director of Afghanistan International TV, Harun Najafzade, said the decision would not affect the channel because it had no employees or freelancers in the country. Afghanistan fares abysmally in terms of press freedom.

LONDON

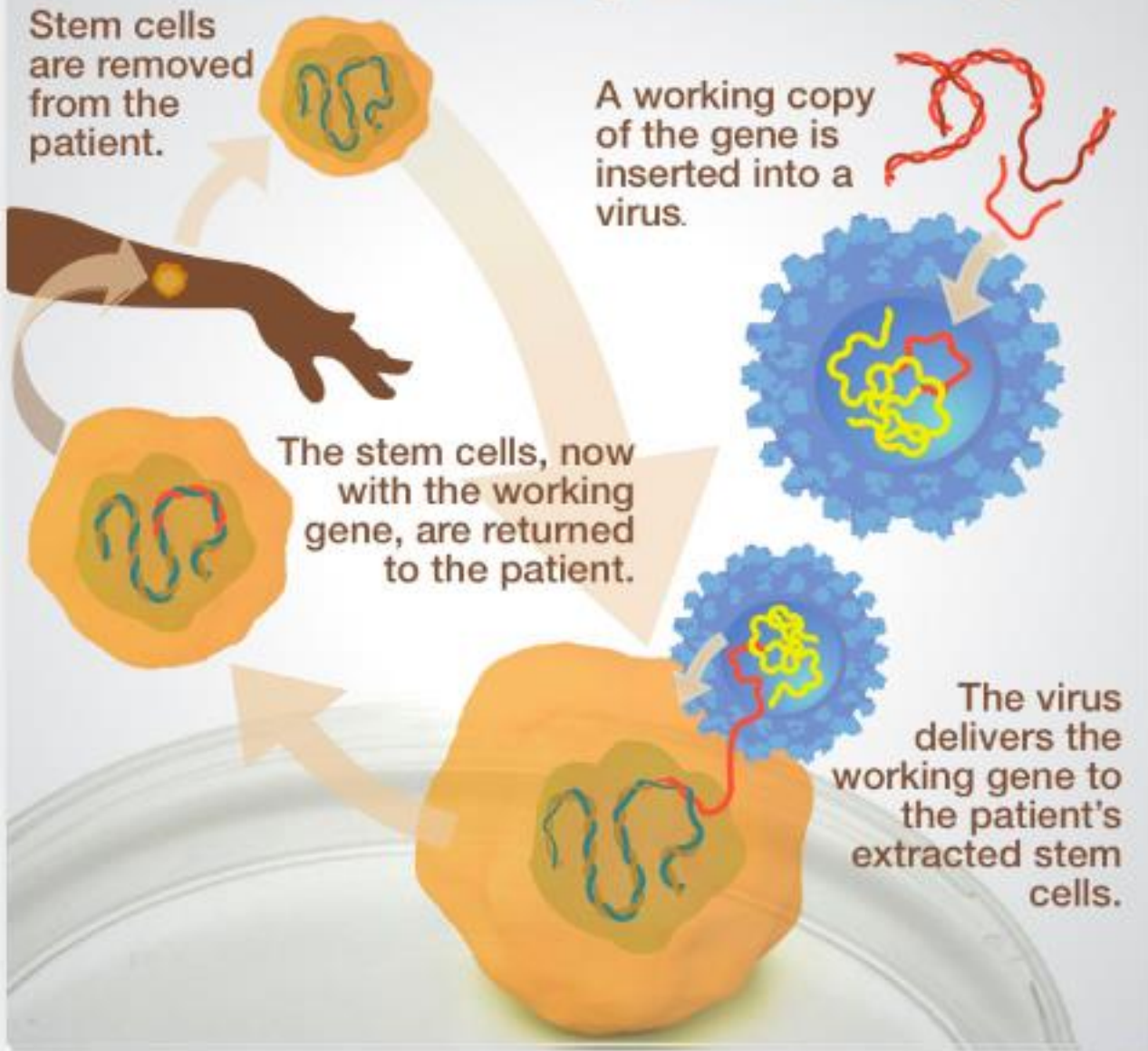
## U.K. girl's hearing restored after groundbreaking gene therapy

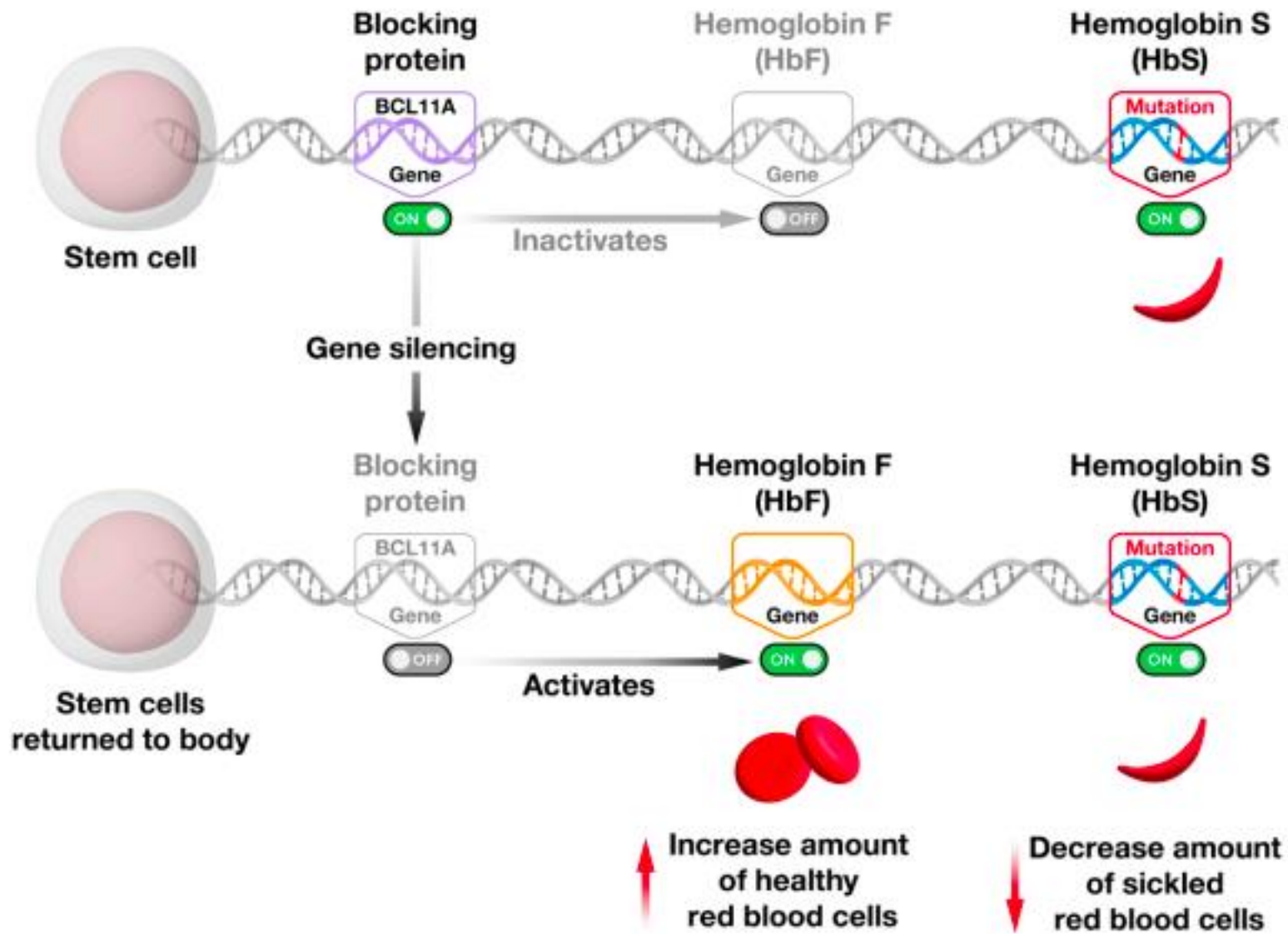


GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

▲ An 18-month old British girl, Opal, who was born without hearing faculty, is believed to be the youngest person to have their hearing restored after undergoing groundbreaking new gene therapy developed by U.S. biotech firm Regeneron. Ear surgeon Manohar Bance called the results close to normal hearing restoration. AFP

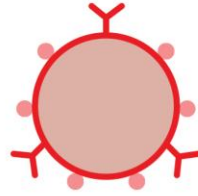
# Immune Deficiency Gene Therapy





# How does the treatment work?

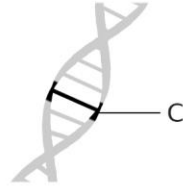
## 1 Alyssa had T-cell leukaemia



T-cells, a type of white blood cell, destroy threats in the body

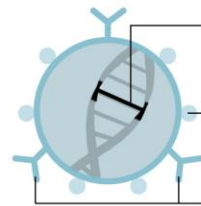
Alyssa's were out of control

## 2 Doctors used 'base editing' to engineer her therapy



Base editing changes one letter in the genetic code

## 3 Donor T-cells were edited in three ways

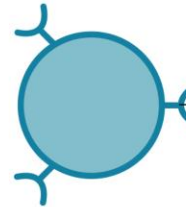


DNA altered to resist chemotherapy

Markings removed to protect donor T-cells

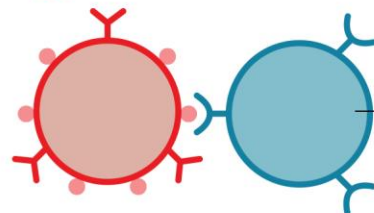
Receptors removed to prevent donor T-cells attacking the body

## 4 T-cells further modified to attack cancer



T-cell rearmed with new receptors

## 5 Battle of the T-cells



Modified T-cells find and destroy cancerous T-cells

# genetic engineering

## new horizons in medicine

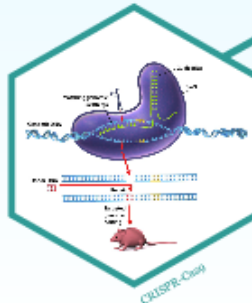
Since genetic engineering (also known as **recombinant DNA technology** or **genetic modification**) was first developed in the 1970s, scientists have discovered more and more ways in which the technology can be used in human medicine. Now techniques, including the gene editing tool known as CRISPR-Cas9, are opening up even more possibilities for us to change the DNA in the cells of bacteria, animals and plants – and potentially change medicine for ever.

### Pharming



Microorganisms, animals and plants can be genetically modified to produce medically useful products. These transgenic organisms are already used regularly to produce substances such as human insulin, human growth hormone and blood clotting factors for haemophiliacs.

### CRISPR-Cas9 technology



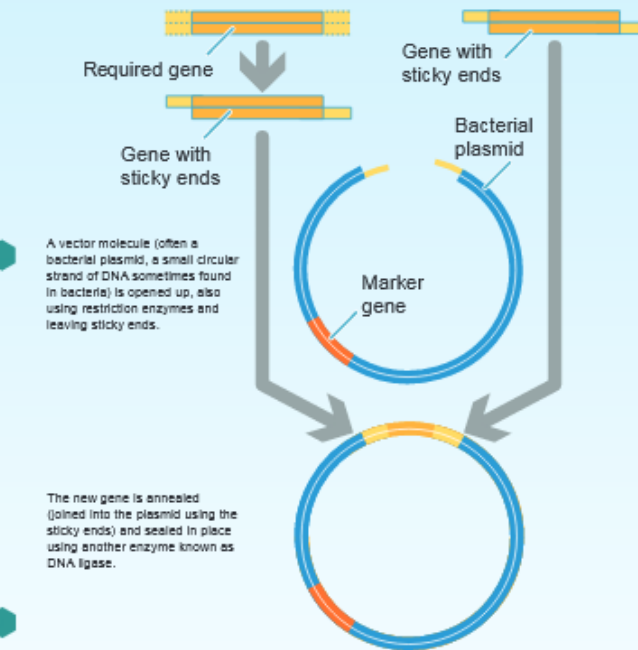
CRISPR-Cas9 is a genome editing tool which is changing the world of genetic engineering fast. It enables scientists to directly remove, add or change sections of the DNA sequence in a living cell. CRISPR-Cas9 is much faster, much cheaper and much more accurate than the traditional ways of editing DNA. Scientists think it has great potential for treating any diseases which involve the genome, including cancers, heart disease and even the high cholesterol levels which are a risk factor for heart disease.

### The basic steps in traditional genetic engineering of a bacterium

The required gene is EITHER cut from the DNA of an organism using enzymes called restriction endonucleases which leave the gene with overlapping sections called sticky ends...

...OR

...synthesised specifically

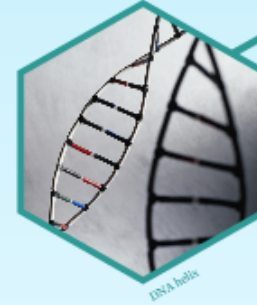


A vector molecule (often a bacterial plasmid, a small circular strand of DNA sometimes found in bacteria) is opened up, also using restriction enzymes and leaving sticky ends.

The new gene is annealed (joined into the plasmid using the sticky ends) and sealed in place using another enzyme known as DNA ligase.

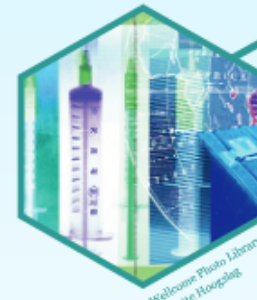
The recombinant plasmid is inserted into a bacterial cell in a process known as transformation. It is then replicated whenever the bacterial cell replicates, and brings about the manufacture of a new protein.

### Gene therapy



Gene therapy is still in its very early stages. It involves modifying human DNA either to repair or replace a faulty gene. The idea of gene therapy is to overcome the effects of a mutation which cause a genetic disease or tendency to a disease. Progress so far has been relatively slow, although there are early signs of success in treating some childhood leukaemias, HIV/AIDS and muscular dystrophy. The speed and precision of CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing technology gives scientists hope for the future.

### Vaccines



Some vaccines are very dangerous to make using conventional methods. Genetically engineered microbes can be used to produce the antigens needed in a safe and controllable way. The use of genetically modified yeast cells to produce a vaccine against the hepatitis B virus has been a major success story.

### Xenotransplantation



The DNA of pigs has been modified using recombinant DNA technology so their cells develop without certain genes which trigger the human immune response. Other genes can be added which express human antigens. Work in this area has been slow, partly due to ethical and safety concerns, but interest is growing. Recent successes include German scientists using CRISPR-Cas9 to deliver multiple gene modifications in pigs, greatly reducing the human immune response to the pig cells.

Photograph by John Thurlbourn, Royal Veterinary College

RAHUL GANDHI VS NARENDRA MODI: SHAH Shah frames poll as vikas vs jihad; Rahul says it's slipping from PM's hands

SREENIVAS JANAYALA HYDERABAD, MAY 9 "2024 ka jo chunav hai, yeh Rahul Gandhi versus Narendra Modi ka chunav hai. Yeh chunav 'vote for jihad' ke against 'vote for vikas' ka chunav hai. (The 2024 election is a Rahul Gandhi versus Narendra Modi election. It is an election that pits 'vote for jihad' against 'vote for vikas'.") He also framed the election as a contest between Modi's "Bharatiya guarantee" and Rahul's "Chinese guarantee". Referring to the Congress, the Bharat Kaarta Samiti (BKS) and the All India Majlis-e-Itrahad Mudra Sena (AIMMS), Shah said, "These people don't allow the celebration of 'Hyderabad Liberation Day'."



Hemant Soren's wife Kalpana with his sister Anjali, who is contesting from Mayurbhanj, Odisha, on Thursday.

Tribal ire over Hemant arrest helps INDIA, but that may not be enough In Jharkhand, ruling coalition hit by graft charges, internal rebellions

ABHISHEK ANGAD RANCHI, MAY 9 THE ARREST of former Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren was seen as one potent issue around which the opposition INDIA bloc could rally together. The case with which Hemant's wife Kalpana Murmu slipped unofficially into her husband's role in the party was also becoming for Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) ranks. Fearing this contest as one between her jailed husband and Prime



Minister Narendra Modi, she recently posted: "Bavehart Soren stays in everyone's hearts. His every work has reached people's hearts. How can you extract him out of people's hearts?" The ruling party was also confident about having read the state's pulse right by pushing for a domicile policy and a Sarna religious code. However, as the Lok Sabha polls finally begin in the state, with four seats set for May 13, the coalition is plagued by charges of corruption, internal rebellions, delay in finalisation of changes and disaffection among the ministers are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

VISIT OF MALDIVES FOREIGN MINISTER MOOSA ZAMEER



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Maldives Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer in New Delhi, Thursday.

First Maldives-India meet amid Muizzu chill flags 'reciprocity'

On Muizzu deadline—eve, Delhi says Indian military personnel have returned

SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, MAY 9 IN A veiled reference to the pro-China tilt of the Maldives government led by President Mohamed Muizzu, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told his Maldivian counterpart, Moosa Zameer Thursday that the development of India-Maldives ties was based on "mutual interests" and "reciprocal sensitivity" given that they are "close and proximate neighbours". The Maldives Foreign Minister and Jaishankar met in New Delhi a day ahead of the May 10 deadline set by President Muizzu for India to withdraw its military personnel from the island nation. Zameer's visit is the first high-level visit to India after Muizzu came to power last November. Jaishankar and Zameer held intensive discussions on the "bilateral relationship" and "regional security issues". On the withdrawal of the Indian military personnel from

THE Maldives, Bandha Jaiswal, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, confirmed that they have returned and have been replaced by "competent Indian technical personnel". Riding to power last November on an 'India Out' poll plank, that it wants to make ties with Delhi. That he chose to visit China ahead of India, asked the Indian military team to leave did not help ties. Both sides have been

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Pradhan: Secys, ministers can't meet Naveen... How is Odisha being run?

LIZ MATHEW SAMBALPUR (ODISHA), MAY 9 TAKING AIM at Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has questioned the state government's track record and asked who was running the state and the ruling party in the state. "What did Odisha get under Naveen babu's leadership? The state is lagging in basic sectors... The state chief secretary and the DCP may not have met the Chief Minister for a year. Neither the secretaries nor the ministers are



Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister of Odisha.

allowed to meet him (Patnaik). How is the state run? Pradhan asked during an interview to The Indian Express at the end of a gripping day of campaigning in Odisha's Sambalpur, which votes on May 25 in the sixth phase of the Lok Sabha elections. Pradhan is contesting against the BJP's candidate V K Pandey, the main target of the BJP's attacks. Pradhan said, "The BJP is a regional party but who is leading it? In a free society, anyone can lead a party. But these months ago, a person who was an official in the Chief Minister's office took over as the party's leader. Instead of serving the public, he served the party. Has it happened anywhere else?" He added, "Where is Naveen Patnaik? He is only in videos. He is absent in the field." Inside

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

REPORT NOT MADE PUBLIC YET Niti Aayog report finds 'huge gap' in cancer screening at Ayushman centres

Centres meant to screen over-30s for oral, breast, cervical cancer annually

HARIKISHAN SHARMA NEW DELHI, MAY 9 BESIDES THE RS 5-lakh insurance cover, the flagship Ayushman Bharat Scheme envisaged the upgrade of primary health centres to Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (HWCCs). These would, among a range of services, offer annual screening for those 30 years or older for Non Communicable Diseases: hypertension, diabetes, and three of the most common cancers in India—oral, breast and cervical. Six years since the launch, the Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme has been availed of by more than 5.47 crore users across the country, making it the world's largest medical insurance scheme. But when it comes to cancer screening at the HWCCs, there is a "huge gap", according to a report from 13 states prepared by NITI Aayog, the government's premier policy think tank. The Indian Express has learnt. This report was prepared by NITI Aayog's Health and Family Welfare Division in January last year. It has not been made public yet. It is learnt that its findings have been shared with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It is learnt that three-member teams of NITI Aayog visited a total of 53 HWCCs across 37 districts in 12 states and one Union Territory over a period of four months in the period between October 2022 to early April 2023 to track the progress and functioning of the HWCCs. The states include Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, and Uttar Pradesh.

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COURT HAS SAID IT MAY RULE TODAY

ED opposes interim bail to Kejriwal, tells SC campaigning not even a legal right

AAP: Disregard of legal procedures, complaint lodged with SC Registry

ANANTHAKRISHNAN NEW DELHI, MAY 9 OPPOSING ANY move to grant interim bail to Delhi Chief Minister and AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal to let him campaign in the Lok Sabha elections, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has told the Supreme Court that "any such concession" to him will "amount to an abridgement to the rule of law and equality... thereby creating two classes in the Indian polity viz. ordinary people, who are bound by the rule of law as well as the laws of the country, and politicians who can seek exemption from the laws". In an affidavit filed Thursday — after the Supreme Court said it "may" pronounce an order on the interim bail Friday — the ED, which arrested Kejriwal on March 21 in the Delhi excise case, said any such bail will "violate the cherished val-



Beant Singh's family on opposite sides in Punjab.

ues of the Constitution which upholds the rule of law as a basic feature meaning thereby that howsoever high you might be, you are not above the law". "The right to campaign for an election neither a fundamental right nor a constitutional right and not even a legal right", the ED said, maintaining that its knowledge, "no political leader has been granted interim bail for campaigning even though he is not the contesting candidate". It said "even a contesting candidate is not granted interim bail, if he is in custody, for his own campaigning" and that "even the right to vote while in judicial custody is not granted".

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Kejriwal was arrested on March 21 in Delhi excise policy case

Beant Singh's family on opposite sides in Punjab

BJP, IND seek floor test in Haryana, Congress wants to meet Governor today

Cong builds campaign around Nehru-Gandhi family's '100-year link' to Rae Bareilly

In Rajasthan, state BJP chief runs into Jagan's 'Navaratna'

DECISION 2024

PAGES 8, 9

As Raj Bhavan makes CCTV footage public, woman says identity shown

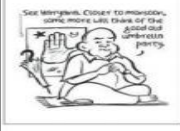
Governor Anurag Singh Bose has been accused of molestation

SWEETY KUMARI KOLKATA, MAY 9

DAYS AFTER a woman contracted COVID-19 in the Raj Bhavan in Kolkata accused West Bengal Governor C V Anurag Singh Bose of molesting her, the Raj Bhavan Thursday showed CCTV footage of the premises from May 2 to the day of the alleged incident — around 100 people. The woman, in response, said, "The footage was released without my permission. The law of the land says that the identity of the complainant should be kept confidential. He (Governor Bose) should be charged with this too. If he is innocent, why is he not letting the police conduct an investigation? I will speak to the police about this." Following the woman's complaint, the Governor had banned

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BUSINESS AS USUAL BY UNNY

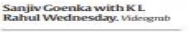


Power and paychecks: Polltime is boomtime for political consultancy

Page 1 ANCHOR AISHWARYA KHOSLA NEW DELHI, MAY 9 REASON TO check if I had been given the wrong address. A couple of minutes later, the client (party candidate) showed up at the spot. We had a conversation about the constituency and started walking in the direction of the hotel," recalls Singh, who works for Ground Zero, a political consultancy firm currently representing the Congress in Maharashtra and Odisha. "As soon as we stepped inside, I was stunned: It was indeed a war room — a big hall with a seating capacity of 70 people, equipped with laptops and PCs, and two dedicated conference rooms for internal meetings,"

Disquiet in LSG over not-so-happy chat in public between owner & captain after crushing defeat

DEVENDRA PANDEY DELHI, MAY 9 THERE IS disquiet in the Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) camp after visuals of team owner Sanjiv Goenka in what appeared to be a not-so-happy conversation with captain K L Rahul did the rounds of social media following the team's 10-wicket thrashing by Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the IPL match Wednesday. Speculation was rife about the duo's long-term future with the Lucknow franchise that is now placed sixth in the 10-team points table and has two more league matches to play this season. After the game, as cameras on the ground zoomed in on



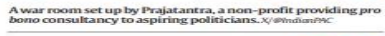
Sanjiv Goenka with KL Rahul Wednesday.

Goenka and Rahul, commentator and former South Africa captain Graeme Smith suggested that the "emotions are all over". "You always feel that these conversations should happen behind closed doors. There are so many cameras around, they miss nothing. Rahul is not gonna go around a conference with a probably potentially explain

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War room set up by Prajatantra, a non-profit providing pro bono consultancy to aspiring politicians

players to enter the field. Many members of the original CAG team went on to build their own teams — Prashant Kishor formed Prajatantra, a non-profit called MindsShare Analytics and Inclusive Minds, Hiranarayan Singh set up the association of Billion Minds, and Robin Sharmma started Shreeya Consulting. Now, many of his associates too have started their own political consulting ventures. By the time of the 2014 national election, the industry was reported to be worth \$40-\$67 million, according to a survey. Industry specialists approximated that the number of firms in this market had at least doubled," wrote Anuradha Sajjanhar in The Economic Survey for her 2023 paper for The Economic Survey. Abhit Singh, a political strategist who has worked with the Congress and Aam Aadmi Party, besides some independent leaders, says, "When I entered the field in 2016, there were very few consultants. Back then, I used to wonder what my Plan B would be should political consulting not work out as a profession. I'm still here, and the consultancy business has only grown since then. In fact, it was one of the few industries that contin-



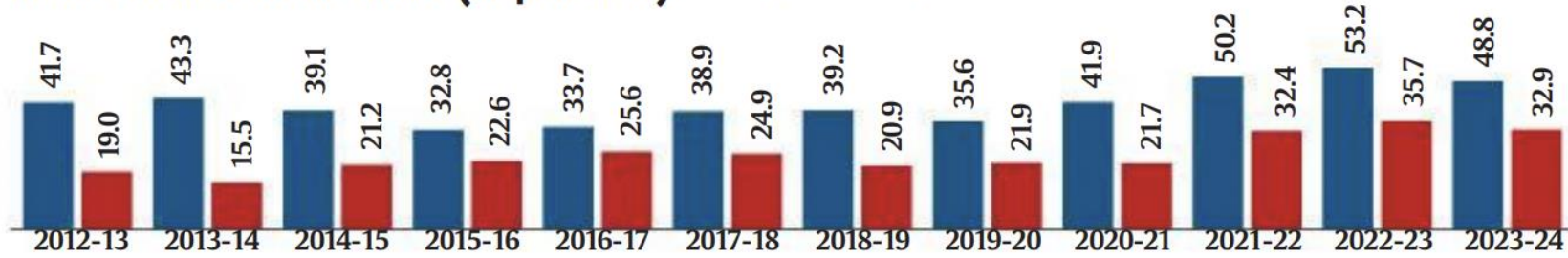
A war room set up by Prajatantra, a non-profit providing pro bono consultancy to aspiring politicians.

used to grow during the Covid pandemic. "That crucial edge that consultancies provide candidates, he says, "This may be the only industry where they are strong and they can't be replaced. I don't know what can be done to get the industry back then." Ritwick Shrivastava, founder and CEO of Prajatantra, a non-profit that provides political consultancy to aspiring politicians, says business has only grown and financial help needed to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**CHART-1****INDIA'S AGRICULTURE TRADE (IN \$ BILLION)**

■ Exports ■ Imports

**TABLE-1****INDIA'S TOP AGRI EXPORT ITEMS (IN \$ MILLION)**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Marine products	7,772.36	8,077.98	7,372.00
Basmati rice	3,537.49	4,787.65	5,843.30
Non-basmati rice	6,133.63	6,356.71	4,573.40
Spices	3,896.03	3,785.36	4,249.36
Buffalo meat	3,303.78	3,193.69	3,743.26
Sugar	4,602.65	5,770.83	2,824.78
Fruits & vegetables	1,692.48	1,791.05	2,037.56
Oilmeals	1,031.94	1,601.72	1,714.02
Processed F&V	1,190.59	1,417.59	1,624.62
Tobacco	923.57	1,213.39	1,449.54
Oilseeds	1,113.65	1,337.69	1,437.02
Coffee	1,020.74	1,146.18	1,286.28
Raw cotton	2,816.24	781.43	1,116.52
Castor oil	1,175.50	1,265.64	1,071.55
Other cereals	1,087.39	1,194.07	517.79
Wheat	2,122.13	1,520.46	56.74
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>50,240.21</b>	<b>53,153.55</b>	<b>48,821.46</b>

\*Includes all other items; Source: Department of Commerce

**TABLE-2****INDIA'S TOP AGRI IMPORT ITEMS (IN \$ MILLION)**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Vegetable oils	18,991.62	20,837.70	1,4871.66
Fresh fruits	2,460.33	2,483.95	2,734.97
Pulses	2,228.95	1,943.89	3,746.78
Spices	1,299.38	1,336.65	1,455.57
Cashew	1,255.46	1,805.67	1,431.39
Raw cotton	559.55	1,438.69	598.64
Natural rubber	1,032.71	937.60	739.18
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>32,422.30</b>	<b>35,686.20</b>	<b>32,870.07</b>

# India as a Net Exporter of Medical Consumables

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5

- 
- **India has achieved a significant milestone in the medical goods business, becoming a net exporter of medical consumables and disposables for the first time in the fiscal year 2022-23.**
  - **This marks a reversal of an old trend where imports of such products outweighed exports.**
  -

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- What is the Status of India's Pharmaceutical Industry?

- **About:**

- **India has historically been dependent on imports for medical consumables and disposables. India has now reversed this trend, indicating a shift towards self-sufficiency in this sector.**
- **India is the largest manufacturer of generic medicines globally. Its pharmaceutical industry plays a crucial role in global healthcare, providing affordable generic medicines.**

- 
- **It is currently valued at USD 50 billion as a major pharmaceutical exporter, with over 200+ countries served by Indian pharma exports.**
  - **It is expected to reach USD 65 Billion by 2024 and to USD 130 Billion by 2030.**
  - **Export and Import Statistics:**
    - **Exports:** India exported medical consumables and disposables worth USD 1.6 billion, showing a 16% surge over the previous fiscal year (2021-22).
    - **Imports:** Imports amounted to approximately USD 1.1 billion, indicating a 33% decline.

- 
- **Major Challenges with India's Pharma Sector:**
  - **Lagging Research and Development (R&D)**
  - **Price Controls and Profit Margins**
  - **Complex Regulatory Framework**
  - **Intellectual Property (IP) Concerns**
  - **Import Dependency**

- 
- **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**

# Hoysala's Sri Madhava Perumal Temple Reveals Trade Route

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- **Recently, Inscriptions found at Sri Madhava Perumal Temple indicate the existence of a major trade route over 1,000 years ago, connecting the Kongu region in western Tamil Nadu with southern Karnataka and Kerala.**
  - **What are the Key Facts About the Madhava Perumal Temple?**
  - **About:**
    - **It is dedicated to the Hindu deity Vishnu, who is worshipped as Madhava Perumal. It is located in Mylapore, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.**

- 
- The Mylapore region came under the rule of the Hoysala dynasty, particularly King Veera Ballala III.
  - The general of the Hoysala army, constructed Dhandanayaka Fort, 680 years ago.
  - The temple in the Dravidian style of architecture was constructed inside the fort.
  - The area was later ruled by the Vijayanagara Empire and Tipu Sultan. The Battle of Sathyamangalam (1790), during the Third Anglo-Mysore War (1790-1792), also took place near the fort.

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- **Temple Inscription:**

- **The inscriptions revealed the existence of a village named Thuravalur.**
- **The area served as a trunk road, and traders crossed River Bhavani and River Moyar to reach Wayanad in Kerala and various places in Karnataka.**
- **Construction of the Bhavanisagar dam in 1948 resulted in the relocation of nearby residents and the shifting of temple idols to new locations in 1953.**

-

## What are the Key Facts about Hoysala Dynasty?

### Origin and Rise:

- The Hoysalas were **feudatories of the Chalukyas of Kalyana**, or the Western Chalukya Empire.
  - The first kings came from the hills **northwest of Dorasamudra (present-day Halebid)**, which became their capital in 1060 AD.
- The most notable rulers of the Hoysala dynasty were **Vishnuvardhana, Veera Ballala II, and Veera Ballala III.**

- **Vishnuvardhana (also known as Bittideva) was the greatest king of the Hoysala dynasty.**
- **They governed areas spanning Karnataka and Tamil Nadu in the Kaveri (Cauvery) river valley between the 11<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> century.**
- **Later, the Vijayanagar dynasty succeeded the Hoysalas.**

# EC Stops Release of Aid Under Rythu Bharosa Scheme

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- Recently, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has put on hold the disbursement of amounts under Rythu Bharosa (previously known as Rythu Bandhu) till the completion of polling for the Lok Sabha election in the State.
  - The Chief Minister of Telangana violated the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) by publicly speaking about ensuing disbursement under the Rythu Bharosa.

- 
- The MCC is a set of guidelines issued by the ECI to regulate the conduct of political parties and candidates during elections.
  - Article 324 of the Constitution grants the ECI the authority to oversee and ensure the conduct of impartial elections for both the Parliament and State Legislatures.
  - The scheme 'RYTHU BHAROSA' is one of the nine navratna welfare schemes launched by Telangana Govt in June 2019.

- **The scheme provides financial assistance of Rs. 13,500 per farmer family every year including tenant farmers also across the state.**
-

# Approval for Phase 2 Trials of MTBVAC

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- Recently, The Central Drug Standard Control Organisation's (CDSCO) has approved the proposal to conduct the phase II clinical trial of the Mycobacterium Tuberculosis (Live Attenuated) Vaccine.
  - The MTBVAC is the first vaccine against TB derived from a human source to begin clinical trials in adults in India.

- 
- Bharat Biotech International Limited in collaboration with Spanish biotechnology company Biofabri have started a series of clinical trials to evaluate the safety, immunogenicity, and efficacy of MTBVAC in India.
  - MTBVAC is being developed for two purposes as a more effective and potentially long-lasting vaccine than BCG (Bacillus Calmette and Guérin) for newborn children, and for the prevention of TB in adults and adolescents, for whom there is currently no effective vaccine.

- **MTBVAC is the only vaccine against tuberculosis in clinical trials based on a genetically modified form of the pathogen isolated from humans *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.**

A close-up, microscopic view of numerous red blood cells. The cells are biconcave and have a reddish-orange hue. They are scattered across the frame, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth. The lighting highlights the texture and shape of the cells.

World Thalassemia Day

- 
- Every year, **World Thalassemia Day** is observed on **May 8** to raise awareness about thalassemia.
  - **About**
  - It was launched by the **Thalassemia International Federation.**
  - The theme of World Thalassemia Day 2024 is **”Empowering Lives, Embracing Progress: Equitable and Accessible Thalassemia Treatment for All.”**

- **Thalassemia:** It is an **inherited genetic hemoglobinopathy**, a group of disorders that lead to **defective production of haemoglobin** synthesis in the body.
  - This results in **low production of red blood cells** and a lack of oxygenated blood supply to the body parts.
- **Thalassemia is mainly classified into two types:** Alpha-thalassemia and Beta-thalassemia.
- **Symptoms:** Anemia, fatigue, enlarged liver and spleen, growth impairment, skeletal deformities, leg ulcers and infections.



**Risk Group:** Anybody can develop the disease, but those with a family history have a higher risk.

It is seen in high frequency in parts of Africa, the Mediterranean region, the Middle East, and Asia. It is also found in malaria-endemic areas.



**Treatment:** Regular blood transfusions are often necessary for individuals with severe forms of thalassemia to maintain adequate levels of hemoglobin and red blood cells.

For eligible patients, a **bone marrow transplant** (also called hematopoietic stem cell transplantation) can be a curative treatment for thalassemia.



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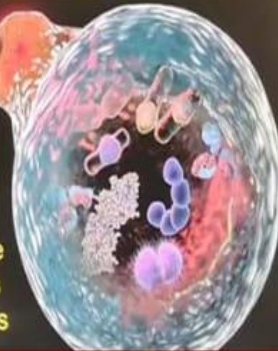
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A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, with some wearing watches. The background is blurred, showing more people and a window. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top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

Thank you  
guys.

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