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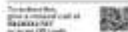


“Start badly, but start—
perfection is just delay in
disguise.”

Class24 Award for selected students

**SSC CGL
FINAL
RESULT
2025-26**





INSIDE



Jaishankar set for UAE visit for talks on energy

NEW DELHI External affairs minister S. Jaishankar will visit the United Arab Emirates on Saturday and Sunday, against the backdrop of rising tensions between the United States, Israel, and Iran, and how that has affected water energy security. **BY PAGE 11**

Iran does not seek war, says Supreme Leader

TEHRAN Iran's new Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in his latest address that the Islamic republic did not seek war with the U.S. and Israel, but would protect its rights as a nation, state media reported on Thursday. **BY PAGE 11**

Haryana medical body threatens to stop services

DELHI The Haryana Medical Council threatened to stop services at the Government Medical College in Haryana town if the state government does not delay in payments and regular administration. **BY PAGE 11**

Over 2 cr. naxals in UP, as NDFB draws to a close

LUCKNOW Over two crore naxals were removed from the electronic list of naxalites in the 160-day anti-naxal mission in the state since a three-month drive, with the closure of the four list. **BY PAGE 11**

10 killed as overcrowded boat capsizes in Yamuna

The boat carrying around 20 people, all from Punjab, reportedly capsized with an iron post on the bridge before overturning in Mathura district of U.P.; around 18 rescued, search is on for more



Against the current, rescue operations started a search operation in Yamuna river after a boat carrying pilgrims capsized near New Delhi. In Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh on Friday.

Mathura Rescue

Local carrying downers from Punjab capsized in the Yamuna river in Mathura district in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, leaving at least 10 dead and several others missing.

About 18 people were rescued and efforts were being made to locate the others, Mathura's District Magistrate Chandra Prakash Singh said. Mr. Singh said all survivors got the boat from Punjab.

The boat was carrying around 20 passengers but was overturned and near-by areas where it reportedly capsized with an iron post on the bridge.

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Local people said that the boat began to sway the bridge due to gusty winds and picked up speed because the cabin. Because

operations were under way with the National and State Disaster Response Force (NDRF and SDRF) and local divers searching deeper stretches of the river. Rescue officials were at the scene to monitor the situation.

Operations ongoing "Around 1:05 p.m., a boat carrying about 20 people from Punjab capsized in the Yamuna river between Mathura and R.C. Ghat. Approximately 20 to 27 people were on board. NDRF members are being contacted to help with the search.

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Justice Varma resigns amid proceedings for removal

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India 'concerned' over mass civilian deaths in Lebanon

India expressed "deep concern" over the loss of civilian lives in Wednesday's Israeli bombing of the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

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Great Nicobar draft plan projects tourism as primary growth driver

Abhaaz Lakshman
NEW DELHI

The draft master plan for the development of the Great Nicobar Island (GNI) under the Central's ₹50,000 crore mega-infrastructure project has proposed to focus on tourism as the primary economic driver for growth, saying that it also intends to get the "population" to settle through permanent and temporary jobs expected to be created. The plan has been drafted by a project of population of 3.36 lakh by 2055. By that time, the plan is expected to achieve an annual inflow of more than a million tourists. Of the population, 2.36 lakh, the local Nicobarese population is expected to grow to about 6,500 from the current 2,500.

The project, which received Stage-I clearance in 2012, includes an international container transshipment port, an airport, power plants and a deep-sea ship shelter, among other infrastructure. The project has proposed to focus on tourism as the primary economic driver for growth, saying that it also intends to get the "population" to settle through permanent and temporary jobs expected to be created. The plan has been drafted by a project of population of 3.36 lakh by 2055. By that time, the plan is expected to achieve an annual inflow of more than a million tourists. Of the population, 2.36 lakh, the local Nicobarese population is expected to grow to about 6,500 from the current 2,500.

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Beach view: The draft notes that it intends to get "population" to settle through permanent and temporary jobs expected to be created. The plan has been drafted by a project of population of 3.36 lakh by 2055. By that time, the plan is expected to achieve an annual inflow of more than a million tourists. Of the population, 2.36 lakh, the local Nicobarese population is expected to grow to about 6,500 from the current 2,500.

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tourism, conferences, conventions, gaming, water, beach, and other recreational activities which may have three parks, water parks, and other recreational parks. One of the draft notes that it intends to get "population" to settle through permanent and temporary jobs expected to be created. The plan has been drafted by a project of population of 3.36 lakh by 2055. By that time, the plan is expected to achieve an annual inflow of more than a million tourists. Of the population, 2.36 lakh, the local Nicobarese population is expected to grow to about 6,500 from the current 2,500.

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Kerala girl found dead near waterfall in Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

A 16-year-old girl from Palakkad in Kerala, who had been missing since Thursday evening, was found dead on Friday near a waterfall in Chikmagalur district of Karnataka. The body of the girl was found about 200 metres below a waterfall. The police said that it would probe the death of the girl. Her relatives alleged foul play, saying that it was unlikely that she voluntarily fell to her death.

SC to take up plea of Indians 'forced' to fight in Ukraine war

Krishnakumar Rajamohan
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday decided to intervene on behalf of 28 persons "arrested" in Russia and made to fight in the Ukraine war "voluntarily" by deceiving a "Russian recruiter" in an "ag" angle.

A three-judge bench of Chief Justice Dhananjaya Kumar and Justices Jayaprakash Narayan and Vikram Patil took up the plea of the petitioners to obtain a copy of their passport and original with the Centre about the alleged inclusion caught in the Russian conflict.

"We are struck in Russia. We are fighting for a foreign state, international dispute and we could be either dead or injured. We are in an extreme situation, the cross for the petitioners submitted, pleading for support and safety of the detained Indian nationals named in the petition. The petitioners seek, trafficking and sale of prohibited Indian citizens. That the FDI has been registered. Russian for their to bring on full fledged" the court said.

Homes trafficking
"This is a case of human trafficking," Justice Narayan said. Chief Justice Kaul, addressing Mr. Mohan, said the petition has alleged

that illegal persons recruitment includes law job like youth with promise of high paying jobs. In the end, their passports are seized, and they are forced into the army. "and because what is happening, what is the state," he expressed concern. "This is very serious," Mr. Mohan responded.

The petition has an original, besides the Union government, the Indian Embassy in the Russian Federation, and the Ministry of External Affairs, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh as respondents.

It has sought a judicial direction to the Union government through the Ministry of External Affairs, to issue "immediate diplomatic and consular assistance through the Embassy of India in the Russian Federation to ascertain that the petitioners' legal status and safety of the detained Indian nationals named in the petition. The petitioners seek, trafficking and sale of prohibited Indian citizens. That the FDI has been registered. Russian for their to bring on full fledged" the court said.

Cong. to consult allies on quota law, delimitation

Sharma to convene NDA bloc meeting ahead of the three-day Special Session to amend women's reservation law, CWC in favour of immediate quota, but warns wider consultation on delimitation

Shankar Prasad
NEW DELHI

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Friday announced the Central government's move to carry out the delimitation exercise on the basis of the 2023 census and operationalise the women's reservation law. It then announced that the party will formulate a joint strategy for the Special Session of Parliament after consulting with Opposition parties.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the party cannot be seen against the interests of the nation in the legislative Assembly. He said the party will have active participation in the delimitation exercise. "The delimitation exercise will be carried out on the basis of the 2023 census and operationalise the women's reservation law. It then announced that the party will formulate a joint strategy for the Special Session of Parliament after consulting with Opposition parties.



Representative Congress Working Committee meeting with party leaders before Parliament on Friday.

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BJP plans public outreach campaign on women's quota

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ahead of the three-day weekend session of Parliament to resolve proposed amendments to the National Women's Reservation Bill, also known as the Women's Reservation Bill, BJP national president Jyoti Basu launched a wide-ranging public outreach programme on the issue with state unit presidents and national office-bearers in New Delhi on Friday.



Sheela Dixit

The government has introduced the Budget Finance Bill, with a special sitting from April 16 to 18. The BJP's outreach campaign is to begin from Saturday and will include at least 20 town hall events, which will be held to be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Addressing a press conference, Congress spokespersons said the party would not support the government's larger plan behind the bill. "The issue is not women's reservation. This is the Prime Minister's game. He uses an analogy in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, the Congress suggests the law in the 2024 Lok Sabha poll."

According to the proposed amendments, the number of Lok Sabha seats would be increased from 543 to 616, with 25% seats reserved for women. The drawing of constituencies will be done based on the 2023 census. A similar exercise will be carried out by State Assemblies, where seats will be reserved on a previous basis.

Missing Kerala girl found dead near waterfall in Karnataka district, family alleges foul play

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

The 10-year-old girl, now named, from Palakkad in Kerala, who had been missing since Tuesday evening near Mandara Falls in Chikmagalur district of Karnataka, was found dead on Friday.



Police officers at the scene of the missing girl's body near Mandara Falls in Chikmagalur district of Karnataka.

The girl was initially spotted on three cameras, and later, the search team reached the spot. The girl was on a visit to

the temple place along with 40 members of her family. The Chikmagalur Rural police had registered a case.

spokes of Forest Department officials, and said, "Chikmagalur Police Commissioner V.K. Nagesh said the family that the body was about 800 metres or 2,600 feet below the place where the waterfall flows normally. "There are metal grids covering the area to prevent people from falling in to the gorge. However, it is to be investigated how the incident happened," he said.

Chikmagalur's superintendent of Police Shri. Kumar Narayan said the police will use the support of Forest Department officials, and said, "Chikmagalur Police Commissioner V.K. Nagesh said the family that the body was about 800 metres or 2,600 feet below the place where the waterfall flows normally. "There are metal grids covering the area to prevent people from falling in to the gorge. However, it is to be investigated how the incident happened," he said.

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On the draw



Congress to celebrate April as 'Social Justice Month'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday announced that it will observe April as "Social Justice Month", marking the birth anniversary of several social reformers and leaders associated with the struggle for equality.

Addressing a press conference in Mumbai before the BJP general conference in Goa, chairman of the party's National Campaign Department, said the programme would be expanded across the country by gearing up with the celebration of Jayaprakash Narayan's birth anniversary in Lucknow on April 11.

All Congress state units were notified from the cell. The party will also organise a "Bharat Kaushal" for the construction of 100,000 houses in April 12.

Over 2 crore names deleted in Uttar Pradesh after release of final list as SIR draws to a close

Mahesh Kumar
LUCKNOW

Over two crore names were removed from the electoral rolls of Uttar Pradesh after the release of the final list of SIR on Friday, with the release of the final list.



People queue for their names to be deleted from the SIR list.

Throughout the State, the 189-day initiative required extensive collaboration between the State and local government officials. The SIR exercise took place from October 25, 2023, to April 10, 2024, comprising 12,000 teams, and 1,75,000 teams were formed from the cell.

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Bihar CM Nitish Kumar takes oath as Rajya Sabha member

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Friday took oath as a member of the Rajya Sabha.

There is no cherry on when he would resign as Chief Minister. Speculation is rife that Mr. Nitish could resign in a day or two and a new Bihar Chief Minister may take oath next week. The BJP chief resigned as a member of the State Legislative Council on March 20 after he was elected to the Rajya Sabha.

The oath was administered by Rajya Sabha Chairman U.P. Baidya. Nitish Kumar is the only member of the Rajya Sabha to have been elected as a member of the State Legislative Council on March 20 after he was elected to the Rajya Sabha.

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Stop Ladki Bahin if there are no funds for pension: HC to Maharashtra govt.

If coffers are empty, sell tables and chairs in municipal offices, but pay pension of ret'd. employees, court tells State govt. while hearing plea of a BMC teacher over non-payment of pending benefits

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government should discontinue the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana if it does not have funds to pay pension to retired employees, the Bombay High Court remarked on Friday.

The court was hearing a retired Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) teacher's plea that she had not been paid pension and other benefits as per the Seventh Pay Commission despite repeated requests.

Question of priorities

Questioning the government's priorities, the court stated, "If the government has no funds to pay pensions, then schemes like Ladki Bahin should be stopped."

Ladki Bahin Yojana, the Mahayuti government's financial assistance scheme for women, under which



Under the Ladki Bahin Yojana, the State govt. provides ₹1,500 monthly to 1.5 crore women. FILE PHOTO

monthly instalments of ₹1,500 are disbursed to around 1.5 crore eligible beneficiaries, has been criticised for burdening the treasury and affecting budgets across various departments.

Diversion of funds

Ministers, including Shiv Sena's Sanjay Shirsat (Social Justice), have complained of budget diver-

sions from their departments to fund the State government's flagship welfare scheme.

"If funds are unavailable and the treasury is empty, then sell the tables, chairs and air conditioners in the municipal offices or sell luxurious cars of the Municipal Commissioner and other officials, but the pension of the employees should be paid immediate-

ly," the court observed.

Official asked to reply

It added, "If the Additional Commissioners get regular salaries, then why can't teachers, who served their entire lives, get their pensions?" The court has directed the Additional Commissioner concerned to submit an affidavit on reasons for the non-payment of pending dues.

- The **Bombay High Court** directed the Maharashtra government to **stop the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana** if it lacks funds to pay pensions to retired employees.
- **बॉम्बे उच्च न्यायालय** ने महाराष्ट्र सरकार को निर्देश दिया कि यदि सेवानिवृत्त कर्मचारियों को पेंशन देने के लिए धन नहीं है तो **मुख्यमंत्री माझी लाडकी बहिण योजना बंद करें**।
- A **retired BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) teacher** filed a plea for unpaid pension and benefits under the **Seventh Pay Commission**.
- एक **सेवानिवृत्त BMC (बृहन्मुंबई महानगरपालिका) शिक्षक** ने सातवें वेतन आयोग के तहत अदेय पेंशन और लाभों के लिए याचिका दायर की।
- The court raised serious concerns about **diversion of pension funds** to finance the flagship welfare scheme.
- अदालत ने प्रमुख कल्याण योजना के वित्तपोषण के लिए **पेंशन निधि के डायवर्जन** पर गंभीर चिंता जताई।
- Ministers (including Shiv Sena's Sanjay Shirsat) acknowledged that **budget diversion** from departments was used to fund Ladki Bahin Yojana.
- मंत्रियों (शिव सेना के संजय शिरसाट सहित) ने स्वीकार किया कि Ladki Bahin Yojana को वित्त पोषित करने के लिए विभागों से **बजट डायवर्जन** किया गया।
- The case highlights the **conflict between populist freebies and constitutional obligations** to pay government employees.
- यह मामला **लोकलुभावन मुफ्त उपहारों और सरकारी कर्मचारियों को भुगतान की संवैधानिक जिम्मेदारियों** के बीच संघर्ष को उजागर करता है।

- **Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana** is Maharashtra's financial assistance scheme for women — **₹1,500/month to 1.5 crore eligible women** — launched by the Mahayuti government.
- **मुख्यमंत्री माझी लाडकी बहिण योजना** महाराष्ट्र की महिलाओं के लिए वित्तीय सहायता योजना है — **1.5 करोड़ पात्र महिलाओं को ₹1,500/माह** — महायुति सरकार द्वारा शुरू।
- A retired BMC teacher went to the Bombay High Court because she was not getting her pension and Pay Commission arrears despite repeated requests.
- एक सेवानिवृत्त BMC शिक्षक बॉम्बे उच्च न्यायालय गई क्योंकि बार-बार अनुरोध के बावजूद उसे पेंशन और वेतन आयोग का बकाया नहीं मिल रहा था।
- The court questioned: if government has no money for pensioners, why is it giving ₹1,500/month to 1.5 crore women — and told the government to prioritise pensions, even if it means selling government assets or stopping the scheme.
- अदालत ने प्रश्न किया: यदि सरकार के पास पेंशनभोगियों के लिए पैसा नहीं है, तो 1.5 करोड़ महिलाओं को ₹1,500/माह क्यों दे रही है — पेंशन को प्राथमिकता देने को कहा, चाहे योजना बंद करनी पड़े।
- This is an important constitutional issue: pensions are a **legal right/entitlement** of retired employees — they cannot be withheld to fund welfare schemes.
- यह एक महत्वपूर्ण संवैधानिक मुद्दा है: पेंशन सेवानिवृत्त कर्मचारियों का **कानूनी अधिकार/हक** है — इसे कल्याण योजनाओं के वित्तपोषण के लिए रोका नहीं जा सकता।

- **Pension = Legal entitlement** of retired government servants; withholding it is legally and constitutionally unjustifiable.
- पेंशन = सेवानिवृत्त सरकारी कर्मचारियों का कानूनी हक; इसे रोकना कानूनी और संवैधानिक रूप से अनुचित।
- **Ladki Bahin Yojana** — costing approximately **₹46,000 crore annually** (1.5 crore × ₹1,500 × 12 months) — is **straining Maharashtra's treasury**.
- **Ladki Bahin Yojana** — लगभग **₹46,000 करोड़ सालाना** (1.5 करोड़ × ₹1,500 × 12 माह) — महाराष्ट्र के खजाने पर दबाव डाल रही है।
- **Fund diversion from departmental budgets** to finance the scheme is causing cascading failures — pension non-payment is one visible consequence.
- योजना के वित्तपोषण के लिए **विभागीय बजट से धन डायवर्जन** व्यापक विफलताओं का कारण बन रहा है — पेंशन की अदायगी न होना एक दृश्य परिणाम।
- **Seventh Pay Commission** recommendations are binding — non-implementation is a statutory violation.
- **सातवें वेतन आयोग** की सिफारिशें बाध्यकारी हैं — लागू न करना वैधानिक उल्लंघन है।

D5. Why Important for India? / भारत के लिए क्यों महत्वपूर्ण?

- **Sets a precedent:** Bombay HC's remarks may influence courts across India to scrutinise how welfare schemes are funded vs statutory obligations.
- **एक मिसाल स्थापित करता है:** बॉम्बे HC की टिप्पणी पूरे भारत की अदालतों को प्रभावित कर सकती है कि वे कल्याण योजनाओं के वित्तपोषण की जाँच करें।
- **Pension as a fundamental right:** Supreme Court has held that pension is a **property right under Article 300A** — not a bounty but a deferred wage.
- **पेंशन एक मौलिक अधिकार के रूप में:** सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने माना है कि पेंशन **अनुच्छेद 300A** के तहत संपत्ति का अधिकार है — दान नहीं बल्कि आस्थगित वेतन।
- **Freebie politics debate:** This case puts judicial spotlight on the growing political practice of launching expensive welfare schemes before elections without adequate fiscal planning.
- **मुफ्त उपहार राजनीति की बहस:** यह मामला चुनाव से पहले पर्याप्त राजकोषीय योजना के बिना महंगी कल्याण योजनाएं शुरू करने की बढ़ती राजनीतिक प्रथा पर न्यायिक प्रकाश डालता है।
- **Municipal finance crisis:** BMC is India's richest municipal body — if even BMC can't pay pensions, smaller ULBs across India are likely in far worse shape.
- **नगर निकाय वित्त संकट:** BMC भारत का सबसे अमीर नगर निकाय है — यदि BMC भी पेंशन नहीं दे सकती, तो भारत के छोटे ULB बहुत बुरी स्थिति में होंगे।

History / इतिहास

- **Pay Commission history in India:** First Pay Commission (1946); subsequent ones in 1959, 1970, 1983, 1994, 2006, 2016; **Seventh Pay Commission** (2016) chaired by Justice A.K. Mathur.
- **भारत में वेतन आयोग का इतिहास:** पहला वेतन आयोग (1946); बाद के 1959, 1970, 1983, 1994, 2006, 2016 में; सातवाँ वेतन आयोग (2016) न्यायमूर्ति A.K. माथुर की अध्यक्षता में।
- **Pension rights evolution:** Pre-1972, pensions were a gratuitous payment; **D.S. Nakara vs Union of India (1982)** established pension as a right, not a bounty.
- **पेंशन अधिकारों का विकास:** 1972 से पहले पेंशन अनुग्रह भुगतान था; **D.S. नकारा बनाम भारत संघ (1982)** ने पेंशन को अधिकार के रूप में स्थापित किया।

Geography / भूगोल

- **BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation):** Governs Mumbai — area 603 sq km; India's **financial capital**; BMC is India's **richest municipal body** with annual budget ~₹50,000 crore+.
- **BMC (बृहन्मुंबई महानगरपालिका):** मुंबई का शासन — 603 वर्ग किमी; भारत की **वित्तीय राजधानी**; BMC ~₹50,000 करोड़+ वार्षिक बजट के साथ भारत का **सबसे अमीर नगर निकाय**।
- **Maharashtra** — India's largest state economy (GDP ~₹40 lakh crore); houses Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur financial hubs.
- **महाराष्ट्र** — भारत की सबसे बड़ी राज्य अर्थव्यवस्था (GDP ~₹40 लाख करोड़); मुंबई, पुणे, नागपुर वित्तीय केंद्र।

- **Pay Commissions of India (Static GK):**
 - 1st (1946) | 2nd (1959) | 3rd (1970) | 4th (1983) | 5th (1994) | 6th (2006) | 7th (2016, Chairman: Justice A.K. Mathur) | 8th Pay Commission announced for 2026
 - 8वाँ वेतन आयोग 2026 के लिए घोषित।
- **Key Supreme Court Judgments on Pension:**
 - **D.S. Nakara vs UOI (1982):** Pension = right, not bounty; pensioners form a class
 - **State of Punjab vs Iqbal Singh (1976):** Pension cannot be reduced arbitrarily
 - **Deokinandan Prasad vs State of Bihar (1971):** Pension is a constitutional right
- **Freebie Debate — Key Cases:**
 - **S. Subramaniam Balaji vs TN (2013):** SC held election promises of freebies not corrupt practice
 - **Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay vs UOI (2022):** SC constituted expert committee to examine freebies; called it a "serious issue"
- **FRBM Act key targets:**
 - Centre: Fiscal deficit \leq 3% of GDP; Revenue deficit = 0%
 - States have their own FRBM targets (generally similar)
 - केंद्र: राजकोषीय घाटा \leq GDP का 3%; राजस्व घाटा = 0%

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- **Article 300A:** Right to property — a constitutional right (not a fundamental right since 44th Amendment 1978); property cannot be deprived except by authority of law.
- **अनुच्छेद 300A:** संपत्ति का अधिकार — 44वें संशोधन 1978 के बाद से मौलिक अधिकार नहीं, संवैधानिक अधिकार।
- **Similar welfare schemes across India (for context):**
 - Ladki Bahin (Maharashtra) — ₹1,500/month
 - Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana (Delhi) — ₹1,000/month (proposed)
 - Gruha Lakshmi (Karnataka) — ₹2,000/month
 - Tamil Nadu — various women welfare schemes
 - महाराष्ट्र, दिल्ली, कर्नाटक, तमिलनाडु — विभिन्न महिला कल्याण योजनाएं

Consider the following statements regarding pension rights and welfare schemes in India: भारत में पेंशन अधिकारों और कल्याण योजनाओं के संदर्भ में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार करें:

1. In D.S. Nakara vs Union of India (1982), the Supreme Court held that pension is a bounty paid at the government's discretion. D.S. नकारा बनाम भारत संघ (1982) में, सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने माना कि पेंशन सरकार के विवेक पर दिया जाने वाला दान है।
2. The FRBM Act (2003) mandates that the central government maintain fiscal deficit within 3% of GDP. FRBM अधिनियम (2003) में केंद्र सरकार को GDP के 3% के भीतर राजकोषीय घाटा बनाए रखने का आदेश है।
3. Orders of the Bombay High Court on matters of municipal finance can be appealed to the Supreme Court of India. नगर वित्त के मामलों में बॉम्बे उच्च न्यायालय के आदेशों को भारत के सर्वोच्च न्यायालय में अपील किया जा सकता है।
4. The Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana provides ₹1,500 per month to approximately 1.5 crore women beneficiaries. मुख्यमंत्री माझी लाडकी बहिण योजना लगभग 1.5 करोड़ महिला लाभार्थियों को ₹1,500 प्रति माह प्रदान करती है।

Which of the statements are correct? कौन से कथन सही हैं?

IN BRIEF



'Will mark death anniversary of Biju as Legendary Leader Day'

The Biju Jyoti Dal (BJJD) on Friday said it will observe the death anniversary of former Odisha Chief Minister Biju Patnaik on April 13 as 'Patnaik Parvata Utsav' (Legendary Leader Day).

Former IAS officer sent to police remand in graft case

A court here on Friday sent former IAS officer Subodh Agarwal to three-day police remand in connection with the alleged graft case over Jil power station works, officials said.

Suspended officials still at work: J&K Dy. CM seeks probe

J&K Deputy Chief Minister Charviary on Friday ordered an inquiry into how "suspended officials continue to work" at the Department of Tourism and Mining.

Stop Ladki Bahin if there are no funds for pension: HC to Maharashtra govt.

If coffers are empty, well tables and chairs in municipal offices, but pay pension of ret'd employees, court tells State govt. while hearing plea of a BMC teacher over non-payment of pending benefits

The Hindu Bureau

The Maharashtra government should discontinue the Mahayennati (Maha Ladki Bahin) scheme if it does not have funds to pay pension to retired employees, the Bombay High Court ordered on Friday.



Below the Ladki Bahin sign, the State govt. provides Rs.1200 monthly to 1.5 lakh workers. (AP Photo)

The court was hearing a petition filed by a retired municipal Corporation (BMC) teacher's plea that she had not been paid pension and other benefits as per the Seventh Pay Commission despite repeated requests.

Monthly payments of Rs.500 are disbursed to around 1.5 crore eligible beneficiaries, but have stopped for thousands for breaking the treasury and affecting budget across various departments.

The court observed, "If the Additional Commissioner get regular salaries, then why can't teachers, who are not even paid their salaries, get their salaries? The court has directed the Additional Commissioner concerned to submit an affidavit on reasons for the non-payment of pending dues.

Top court refuses to intervene in voter deletion case in T.N.

Richhadas Dabholkar

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to intervene for a woman whose name was deleted from the Tamil Nadu voter roll in the special delimitation exercise (SDE).



C. Karunanidhi received the new court order after the Madras High Court directed to give her name.

The petitioner, C. Karunanidhi, said her name had been a mistake in the voter's electoral roll over the year. She was even sending in content on an Internet website to the 24thangarai DC Assembly constituency and to the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly in the upcoming assembly elections.

Appearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India Suresh K. Jaisankar, as well as Justices Dipak Mishra and J. Prasad, the court asked why the HC was not aware of the voter's name when she was being deleted.

Mr. Karunanidhi said she had not received any notice from the Election Commission of India (EC) and only came to know of the voter's name when she was being deleted.

United stand of NCP factions, emotional appeals behind Cong. retreat in Baramati

NEWS ANALYSIS

Yashwantrao Chavan (left)

Was political unity between the rival factions of Maharashtra's Congress Party (NCP) and emotional appeals led the Maharashtra Congress and to split over the race for the Assembly in Baramati.

Called Mr. Chavan, the NCP, headed by Mr. Sharad Pawar, who after 10 years joined the Mahayennati alliance in July 2002 and took oath as Deputy CM.

Migratory birds pose huge risk to flights, says wildlife body and rejects airport plan in Puri

News Analysis

The Wildlife Institute of India (WII) has warned that the proposed plan to build a new airport in Puri, Orissa, poses a huge risk to migratory birds.



The proposed plan to build the airport in Puri, Orissa, poses a huge risk to migratory birds.

The Airport Authority of India and the State government jointly proposed the plan for the new airport in Puri. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has approved the plan.

Bail for two 2011 Mumbai blast accused after 15 years

Pran Tiwat of India

A special court on Friday granted bail to two persons accused in the 2011 Mumbai train bombings case who have been in jail for nearly 15 years.

Cong. to consult allies on quota law, delimitation

Kharge to convene INDIA bloc meeting ahead of the three-day Special Session to amend women's reservation law; CWC in favour of immediate quota, but wants wider consultation on delimitation

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Friday discussed the Central government's move to carry out the delimitation exercise on the basis of the 2011 census and operationalise the women's reservation law. It then announced that the party will formulate a joint strategy for the Special Session of Parliament after consulting other Opposition parties.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge will convene a meeting of the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) on April 15, a day before the three-day Special Session begins to amend the women's reservation law so that it can be implemented by the 2029 Lok Sabha election and increase the strength of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies by 50%.

'Serious consequences'
In his opening speech to the CWC, Mr. Kharge said the proposed changes will have "serious consequences" and will "seriously impact" the electoral system. "It [the government] wants to increase the Lok



Key meeting: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with party leaders Rahul Gandhi and K.C. Venugopal and others during the CWC meeting at Indira Bhawan in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

Sabha seats from 543 to 816. There will be an increase in the same proportion in the legislative Assemblies. This delimitation proposal will have serious consequences. Therefore, there is a need for a deep discussion on delimitation," Mr. Kharge said.

At the closed-door meeting, sources said, discussions centred around evolving a strategy that makes it clear that the Congress supports the immediate implementation of women's reservation law, but wants wider consultation on the delimitation exercise.

Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, who joined the

meeting online, said the party cannot be seen opposing the immediate implementation of women's reservation, while Rahul Gandhi asserted the delimitation will necessarily lead to a talk of a North-South divide. This point was amplified by Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

MP Manish Tewari is said to have argued that instead of fixing a predetermined number like 50%, the strength of legislature should be fixed post census. Seats can then be reserved for women on the current strength of 543 members.

Party leader Priyanka

Gandhi Vadra noted that it was important to understand the government's larger plan behind the move.

Addressing a press conference, Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh reiterated the party's demand for an all-party meeting after the ongoing Assembly elections get over on April 29. "It [delimitation] will have far-reaching consequences," he said. "The issue is not women's reservation. This is the Prime Minister's game. He owes an apology to the women of the country for disregarding the Congress suggestion of implementing the law in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls."

- The Central government announced a **Special Session of Parliament** (3 days) to amend the **Women's Reservation Law** and implement it by the **2029 Lok Sabha election**.
- केंद्र सरकार ने **महिला आरक्षण कानून** में संशोधन और **2029 लोकसभा चुनाव** तक इसे लागू करने के लिए **संसद का विशेष सत्र** (3 दिन) घोषित किया।
- The government also proposed **delimitation on the basis of 2011 Census**, increasing Lok Sabha seats from **543 to 816** and State Assembly seats by **50%**.
- सरकार ने **2011 जनगणना के आधार पर परिसीमन** का प्रस्ताव रखा — लोकसभा सीटें **543 से 816** और विधानसभा सीटें **50% बढ़ाने** का।
- **Congress Working Committee (CWC)** met to formulate strategy — supports women's quota immediately but demands wider consultation on delimitation.
- **कांग्रेस कार्य समिति (CWC)** ने रणनीति बनाने के लिए बैठक की — महिला आरक्षण तुरंत समर्थन, लेकिन परिसीमन पर व्यापक परामर्श की माँग।
- Congress president **Mallikarjun Kharge** to convene **INDIA bloc meeting on April 15** — one day before the Special Session starts.
- कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष **मल्लिकार्जुन खड़गे** **15 अप्रैल** को **INDIA गठबंधन बैठक** बुलाएंगे — विशेष सत्र से एक दिन पहले।
- Delimitation is being opposed as a potential **North-South divide** — southern states fear loss of representation due to lower population growth.
- परिसीमन को संभावित **उत्तर-दक्षिण विभाजन** के रूप में विरोध — दक्षिणी राज्यों को कम जनसंख्या वृद्धि के कारण प्रतिनिधित्व की हानि का डर।

- **Women's Reservation Law (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023)** reserves **33% seats** in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for women — but it requires delimitation first before it can be implemented.
- **महिला आरक्षण कानून (नारी शक्ति वंदन अधिनियम, 2023)** लोकसभा और विधानसभाओं में **33% सीटें** महिलाओं के लिए आरक्षित करता है — लेकिन लागू होने से पहले परिसीमन जरूरी है।
- **Delimitation** means redrawing the boundaries of electoral constituencies based on population data from a census — it also determines how many seats each state gets.
- **परिसीमन** का मतलब है जनगणना के आधार पर निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों की सीमाओं को फिर से खींचना — यह यह भी तय करता है कि प्रत्येक राज्य को कितनी सीटें मिलती हैं।
- Southern states (Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra, Telangana) controlled their population growth better — so if seats are allocated purely on population, they may **lose relative representation** compared to populous northern states.
- दक्षिणी राज्यों ने जनसंख्या वृद्धि को बेहतर नियंत्रित किया — इसलिए यदि सीटें विशुद्ध जनसंख्या पर आवंटित हों, तो वे उत्तरी राज्यों की तुलना में **सापेक्ष प्रतिनिधित्व खो सकते हैं**।
- Congress supports women's reservation now but wants the delimitation debate to be done separately and carefully.
- कांग्रेस अभी महिला आरक्षण का समर्थन करती है लेकिन परिसीमन बहस को अलग से और सावधानीपूर्वक करना चाहती है।

- **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Women's Reservation Act), 2023:** Passed by Parliament in September 2023; reserves 33% seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies; but linked to delimitation — hence not yet implemented.
- **नारी शक्ति वंदन अधिनियम, 2023:** सितंबर 2023 में संसद द्वारा पारित; महिलाओं के लिए 33% सीटें आरक्षित; लेकिन परिसीमन से जुड़ा — इसलिए अभी लागू नहीं।
- **Delimitation** was last done in **2002** based on **2001 Census** (effective from 2008 elections); due to constitutional freeze (Article 82/170), no change was made after 2001 Census till now.
- **परिसीमन** अंतिम बार **2001 जनगणना** के आधार पर **2002** में हुआ (2008 चुनावों से प्रभावी); संवैधानिक रोक (अनुच्छेद 82/170) के कारण 2001 जनगणना के बाद कोई बदलाव नहीं।
- **Constitutional freeze on delimitation** was placed by 42nd Amendment (1976) — frozen till 2000; extended by 84th Amendment (2001) till after 2026.
- **परिसीमन पर संवैधानिक रोक** 42वें संशोधन (1976) द्वारा — 2000 तक जमाया; 84वें संशोधन (2001) द्वारा 2026 के बाद तक बढ़ाया।
- Government is now proposing using **2011 Census** (instead of waiting for 2021 Census, delayed due to COVID) as the basis.
- सरकार अब **2011 जनगणना** (2021 जनगणना, जो COVID के कारण विलंबित, का इंतजार करने की बजाय) को आधार के रूप में उपयोग करने का प्रस्ताव दे रही है।

History / इतिहास

- **73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1992-93):** Introduced 33% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj institutions and Urban Local Bodies — Women's Reservation in Parliament has been pending since then.
- **73वें और 74वें संविधान संशोधन (1992-93):** पंचायती राज संस्थाओं और शहरी स्थानीय निकायों में महिलाओं के लिए 33% आरक्षण — संसद में महिला आरक्षण तब से लंबित।
- **Women's Reservation Bill:** First introduced in **1996** (Deve Gowda government); lapsed multiple times over 27 years; finally passed as **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in September 2023.**
- **महिला आरक्षण विधेयक:** पहली बार **1996** में (देवेगौड़ा सरकार) पेश; 27 वर्षों में कई बार समाप्त; अंततः **सितंबर 2023** में नारी शक्ति वंदन अधिनियम के रूप में पारित।
- **Delimitation Commission History:** Set up under Delimitation Commission Act; previous commissions in 1952, 1963, 1973, 2002.
- **परिसीमन आयोग इतिहास:** परिसीमन आयोग अधिनियम के तहत स्थापित; पिछले आयोग 1952, 1963, 1973, 2002 में।

- **Article 82 (Lok Sabha delimitation) and Article 170 (State Assembly delimitation):** Mandate readjustment of seats after each Census; but constitutional amendments froze this.
- **अनुच्छेद 82 (लोकसभा परिसीमन) और अनुच्छेद 170 (राज्य विधानसभा परिसीमन):** प्रत्येक जनगणना के बाद सीटों के पुनर्समायोजन का आदेश।
- **42nd Constitutional Amendment (1976):** Froze delimitation till year 2000 (to encourage family planning — southern states' compliance rewarded, but now being penalised).
- **42वाँ संविधान संशोधन (1976):** परिसीमन को 2000 तक जमाया (परिवार नियोजन प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए)।
- **84th Constitutional Amendment (2001):** Extended freeze on seat reallocation till after 2026 census.
- **84वाँ संविधान संशोधन (2001):** 2026 जनगणना के बाद तक सीट पुनर्वितरण पर रोक बढ़ाई।
- **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Constitution 106th Amendment Act, 2023):** Inserts **Article 330A** (Lok Sabha) and **Article 332A** (State Assemblies); effective only after delimitation following next Census.
- **नारी शक्ति वंदन अधिनियम (संविधान 106वाँ संशोधन अधिनियम, 2023):** अनुच्छेद 330A (लोकसभा) और अनुच्छेद 332A (राज्य विधानसभाएं) सम्मिलित; अगली जनगणना के बाद परिसीमन के बाद ही प्रभावी।
- **Delimitation Commission Act, 2002:** Constituted the last Delimitation Commission; any new exercise will need fresh legislative/constitutional basis.
- **परिसीमन आयोग अधिनियम, 2002:** अंतिम परिसीमन आयोग का गठन किया।

- **Key Constitutional Articles for Delimitation:**
 - Article 82: Parliament to readjust Lok Sabha seats after each Census / जनगणना के बाद लोकसभा सीटों का पुनर्समायोजन
 - Article 170: State Legislative Assembly seat readjustment / राज्य विधानसभा सीटों का पुनर्समायोजन
 - Article 330A (new): Women's reservation in Lok Sabha / लोकसभा में महिला आरक्षण
 - Article 332A (new): Women's reservation in State Assemblies / राज्य विधानसभाओं में महिला आरक्षण
- **Constitutional Amendments Linked to This Topic:**
 - 42nd Amendment (1976) — froze delimitation
 - 73rd Amendment (1992) — 33% for women in Panchayats
 - 74th Amendment (1993) — 33% for women in ULBs
 - 84th Amendment (2001) — extended delimitation freeze
 - 106th Amendment (2023) — Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam
- **Global Comparison — Women in Parliament (2024):**
 - Rwanda: ~61% | Iceland: ~47% | Sweden: ~46% | India: ~15%
 - रवांडा: ~61% | आइसलैंड: ~47% | स्वीडन: ~46% | भारत: ~15%
- **TFR (Total Fertility Rate) Key Data:**
 - Replacement level TFR = 2.1
 - Kerala ~1.8 | Tamil Nadu ~1.7 | Karnataka ~1.9 | Bihar ~3.0 | UP ~2.4 (approximate, Needs verification)
 - प्रतिस्थापन स्तर TFR = 2.1 | केरल ~1.8 | तमिलनाडु ~1.7 | बिहार ~3.0

L. Statement-Based MCQ / कथन-आधारित MCQ

Consider the following statements about Women's Reservation and Delimitation in India: भारत में महिला आरक्षण और परिसीमन के बारे में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार करें:

1. The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (2023) reserves 33% seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, and it can be implemented from the next election without delimitation. नारी शक्ति वंदन अधिनियम (2023) लोकसभा और राज्य विधानसभाओं में 33% सीटें आरक्षित करता है, और इसे परिसीमन के बिना अगले चुनाव से लागू किया जा सकता है।
2. The 42nd Constitutional Amendment (1976) froze delimitation to prevent states implementing family planning from losing parliamentary seats. 42वें संविधान संशोधन (1976) ने परिसीमन को रोका ताकि परिवार नियोजन लागू करने वाले राज्यों को संसदीय सीटें न गँवानी पड़ें।
3. Orders of the Delimitation Commission can be challenged in the Supreme Court of India. परिसीमन आयोग के आदेशों को भारत के सर्वोच्च न्यायालय में चुनौती दी जा सकती है।
4. The government proposes increasing Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 816 based on the 2011 Census. सरकार 2011 जनगणना के आधार पर लोकसभा सीटें 543 से बढ़ाकर 816 करने का प्रस्ताव देती है।

Which of the statements given above are correct? उपर्युक्त में से कौन से कथन सही हैं?

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'Craving Control'
Cutting out 'food noise' to fight off obesity

Can the GLP-1 drug, which acts against 'food noise', solve the obesity crisis that goes beyond body size?

MAGAZINE PAGE 1



Prototype fast breeder reactor: a nuclear paradox

PROFILES PAGE 8



The SIR controversy in West Bengal

SAG PAGE 8

Samson shines as Super Kings registers its first win

SPORT PAGE 11



INSIDE

U.S., Iran hold direct talks in Pak. as truce holds

Pak. PM meets U.S. team, led by Vance, and Speaker Galbraf-led Iranian team separately

Iran state media says negotiations began after 'preconditions' raised by Iran were met

Tehran insists on preserving military gains, seeks compensation for damage caused in war

Associated Press
DAMAMAH

First Indian ship crosses Hormuz after ceasefire

NEW DELHI
An Indian-flagged liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker, Jig Sakon, has crossed the Strait of Hormuz, marking the first such transit by an Indian vessel since a temporary two-week ceasefire between the U.S. and Iran was announced on PAGE 11

Nitish Kumar likely to resign as CM tomorrow

PATNA
JDU chief Nitish Kumar is likely set to step down as Bihar Chief Minister on April 11, paving the way for the formation of a new government in the state two days later, according to senior party leaders who met here on Saturday on PAGE 2

Journalists speak out against online censorship

NEW DELHI
Working journalists' representatives on Saturday spoke out against increasing censorship online, and the proposed changes to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, at the Press Club of India on PAGE 3

Iran's state-run news agency said the talks had begun after Iranian preconditions, including a reduction in Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon, were met.

Iran doubled down on parts of its earlier proposal, with its delegation telling Iranian state television it had prevented some of the plan's ideas as "red lines" in meetings with Mr. Shariif. Those included compensation for damage caused by the U.S.-Israeli strikes and releasing Iran's frozen assets.

The Strait of Hormuz remains among the main points of "serious disagreement", Iran's Tammim news agency reported, adding that consultations were continuing despite what is described as excessive U.S. demands, while Iran insisted on preserving its mili-

itary gains. U.S. President Donald Trump, ahead of the talks, accused Iran of using the Strait of Hormuz, a key artery for global energy supplies, for extortion, and told reporters on Friday that it would be opened "with or without them".

More rounds of talks
While Iran state media said two rounds of discussions were over and a third is expected on Saturday night

was referring to the reported use of mines there or Iran's broader ability to control the area.

Since the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the most direct contact, Washington had with Tehran was in 2013 when then-President Barack Obama called newly elected President Hassan Rouhani to discuss Iran's nuclear programme. The recent highest-level meetings were between secretary of state John Kerry and counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif during talks over the programme.

The war has killed at least 3,000 people in Iran, 1,062 in Lebanon, 23 in Israel and more than a dozen in Gulf Arab states, and caused lasting damage to infrastructure in half a dozen regional countries. Iran's chokehold on the vital Strait of Hormuz has largely cut off the Persian Gulf and its oil and gas exports from the global economy, reducing the high stakes, officials from the region said.

Chinese, Egyptian, Saudi and Qatar officials were in Islamabad to indirectly facilitate the ceasefire talks.

Meanwhile, Israel pressed ahead with strikes in Lebanon after saying there is no ceasefire there, Iran and Pakistan have disagreed. Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi had said Tehran was continuing negotiations with "deep distrust" after strikes on Iran during previous rounds of talks. Mr. Araghchi said on Saturday that his country was prepared to retaliate if attacked again.

Beyond the moon and back



Hezbollah slams talks as Israel kills 10 in Lebanon

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Hezbollah lawmaker Hassan Fadallah on Saturday reiterated his group's rejection of direct negotiations between Israel and Lebanon, where authorities reported 10 people killed in Israeli attacks in the south.

The office of Lebanon President Joseph Aoun said on Friday that officials from his country, Israel and the U.S. would meet next week in Washington "to discuss declaring a ceasefire and the start date for negotiations between Lebanon and Israel under U.S. auspices".

Beirut is seeking the withdrawal of Israeli

ground invasion in the coastal city of Sidon, meanwhile, hundreds of people attended a funeral procession on Saturday for 11 state security personnel who were killed the day before in Israeli strikes that hit their office in Nabatiyah.

Constitutional violation
Hezbollah MP Fadallah said the decision to hold direct talks with Israel was "a blatant violation of the national pact, the Constitution and Lebanese laws".

The move "exacerbates domestic divisions at a time when Lebanon must needs solidarity and internal unity to face Israel's aggression and preserve civil

peace", he said in a statement.

Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Yechiel Lerner has said his country "agreed to begin formal peace negotiations" with the Lebanese government, but "refused to discuss a ceasefire with the Hezbollah".

Lebanon's Health Ministry said 10 people were killed by Israeli strikes in the south on Saturday, with state media reporting Israeli raids on more than a dozen locations.

After a ceasefire was announced between the U.S. and Iran this week, the two sides have been at talks over whether it also applies to Lebanon, while Israel has kept up heavy strikes.

Bangladesh Minister hints at taking exiled former PM Hasina's extradition forward

Muhammad Hossain
PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS

Bangladesh "reiterated" its demand for extradition of its former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during talks in Delhi with Indian Foreign Minister Khalidur Rahman, he said, while also looking forward to a visit by the new Prime Minister, Taruna Rahman, to India.

"We have already asked for (Sheikh Hasina's) return under our extradition treaty," Mr. Khalidur Rahman said in Port Louis, Mauritius on Friday, responding to a question. "I am not disclosing anything because I cannot."

The request had been made by the previous caretaker government under the India-Bangladesh extradition treaty, and the Minister's comments confirm that the new Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government intends to take the pressure forward. Mr. Khalidur Rahman said he would be visiting to Delhi this week, before travelling to Mauritius to attend the ninth Indian Ocean Conference.

The External Affairs Ministry did not respond to a request for a comment on India's response to the request made during talks.

The External Affairs Ministry did not respond to a request for a comment on India's response to the request made during talks.

"Optimistic" on ties
Mr. Khalidur Rahman said he was "reasonably optimistic" about bilateral relations after his meetings in Delhi.

"The leaders of our two countries, my PM Tarique Rahman and Indian PM Narendra Modi, had not only exchanged letters, they also spoke, and both want to advance the relationship. It is a relationship of consequence to both countries, and we talked about how to carry it forward. I hope that we will do this in the next few weeks," he said in a short interview before leaving for Dhaka.

Asked if Mr. Tarique Rahman, who took office in February, would visit India soon, he said, "There will be a visit, but we have not yet finalised the dates. In the run-up to the visit, there will be many activities."

Mr. Khalidur Rahman's comments and outlook of future high-level exchanges are significant, given that his "stopover" visit to Delhi was the first such outreach between India and the new Bangladesh government after tensions with the interim Adhikar Yousuf administration, and a lack of engagement with the BNP during Ms. Hasina's tenure.

Ms. Hasina has been fleeing the partnership since the violent protests in Dhaka on August 5, 2024.

During talks in Delhi, Bangladesh raised the issue of restarting visas that have been restricted by India in the past year and held discussions on energy supplies given the shortages due to the war in West Asia.

"We haven't seen anything yet - it will get worse. There is no absolutely no way of confronting this crisis, alone because the effects will reverberate through the years," Mr. Khalidur Rahman said, when asked by *The Hindu* about regional responses to the crisis. "The 1970s double oil crisis (OPEC) and 1979 Iranian revolution led to the crisis as a host decade of development. We must learn together or we individually suffer," he said, adding that Bangladesh was eager to work on BIMSTEC - that it is chafing this year - and SAARC (which has been suspended due to India-Pakistan tensions).

U.S., Iran hold direct talks in Pak. as truce holds

Pak. PM meets U.S. team, led by Vance, and Speaker Galibaf-led Iranian team separately

Iran state media says negotiations began after 'preconditions' raised by Iran were met

Tehran insists on preserving military gains, seeks compensation for damage caused in war

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

The United States and Iran began face-to-face negotiations in Pakistan on Saturday, days after a fragile, two-week ceasefire was announced in the war that has killed thousands of people and shaken global markets.

The White House confirmed the direct nature of the talks, a rare instance of high-level U.S. government engagement with the Iranian government.

The U.S. delegation, led by Vice-President J.D. Vance, and the Iranian delegation, led by Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, met with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif separately ahead of the three-party talks with Pakistan.

Iran's state-run news agency said the talks had begun after Iranian preconditions, including a reduction in Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon, were met.

Iran doubled down on parts of its earlier proposal, with its delegation telling Iranian state television it had presented some of the plan's ideas as "red lines" in meetings with Mr. Sharif. Those included compensation for damage caused by the U.S.-Israeli strikes and releasing Iran's frozen assets.

The Strait of Hormuz remains among the main points of "serious disagreement", Iran's Tasnim news agency reported, adding that consultations were continuing despite what it described as excessive U.S. demands, while Iran insisted on preserving its mili-



Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif speaks with Iran Parliament Speaker Mohammed Bagher Ghalibaf in the presence of other top officials from both countries in Islamabad on Saturday. AFP

tary gains. U.S. President Donald Trump, ahead of the talks, accused Iran of using the Strait of Hormuz, a key artery for global energy supplies, for extortion, and told reporters on Friday that it would be

opened "with or without them".

More rounds of talks

While Iran state media said two rounds of discussions were over and a third is expected on Saturday night

or on Sunday, the White House said talks were ongoing late on Saturday.

On Saturday, Mr. Trump said on social media that the U.S. had begun "clearing out" the strait, but it was unclear whether he

was referring to the reported use of mines there or Iran's broader ability to control the area.

Since the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the most direct contact Washington had with Tehran was in 2013 when then-President Barack Obama called newly elected President Hassan Rouhani to discuss Iran's nuclear programme. The recent highest-level meetings were between Secretary of State John Kerry and counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif during talks over the programme.

The war has killed at least 3,000 people in Iran, 1,953 in Lebanon, 23 in Israel and more than a dozen in Gulf Arab states, and caused lasting damage to infrastructure in half a dozen regional countries. Iran's chokehold on the vital Strait of Hormuz has lar-

gely cut off the Persian Gulf and its oil and gas exports from the global economy. Reflecting the high stakes, officials from the region said Chinese, Egyptian, Saudi and Qatari officials were in Islamabad to indirectly facilitate the talks.

Meanwhile, Israel pressed ahead with strikes in Lebanon after saying there is no ceasefire there. Iran and Pakistan have disagreed. Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi had said Tehran was entering negotiations with "deep distrust" after strikes on Iran during previous rounds of talks. Mr. Araghchi said on Saturday that his country was prepared to retaliate if attacked again.

(With inputs from Reuters and AFP)

FAQ

What is Anthropic's Claude Mythos model?

Is Mythos really that capable? Why is this LLM not being made available to the public? What is Project Glasswing?

Atom Bomb

In April 7, Anthropic, the AI company behind the coding and productivity-focused Large Language Model (LLM) family Claude, announced Mythos. This is its most powerful model yet, capable of finding bugs in old software that have not been flagged by humans so far. Anthropic said that it would not release the LLM widely, but only to a consortium of over 40 companies, which will use it to scan decades-old code to find software vulnerabilities not detected by humans yet.

What is Claude and why is it a notable product in AI circles? Claude is an LLM developed by San Francisco-based Anthropic, like OpenAI's GPT-3 and Google's Gemini. However, its reputation for quality outputs in fields such as coding have lent it a reputation unlike any other LLM on the market. Claude is accessed via a command-line interface as well as a suite of apps for different platforms, published by Anthropic.

In increasing order of sophistication, Anthropic's other LLMs are Haiku, Sonnet, and Opus. All three have been praised for their performance and reasoning capabilities, which are critical to composing code and performing tasks specifically. AI firms often seek to open source their models, restricting access by rationing access to use and imposing subscription or usage-based pricing for users.

In spite of its generally significant pricing, both usage-based pricing and subscription models with these capabilities could appear eventually operational expenditure in the hopes of coming out on top in the AI race. Anthropic is not an outlier, since it does not make profits, but its usage-based pricing is the subject of frequent complaints among users.

How is Mythos different from Claude's other models?

Cybersecurity has been an unintended side effect of these models' coding prowess. Opus was able to find multiple bugs in highly scrutinized pieces of open-source software, which are used in both private and public IT systems heavily. Human reviewers frequently find bugs, or security vulnerabilities, and they are "patched" so that attackers cannot exploit them to remotely shut down or gain access to computer systems.

Opus found bugs that humans missed, one Anthropic executive said at a talk in March, leading to worries within the company that its technology could be used by hackers to exploit, rather than find and patch, vulnerabilities. Mythos has already been able to find "hundreds" of "severe" security vulnerabilities. Anthropic announced Project Glasswing, a defensive cybersecurity initiative, in partnership with Microsoft, Apple, Cisco, and other companies whose products and services form the backbone of several other companies and protect across cyberspace.

Is Mythos really that capable? What is the problem if every company has access to it? It is not possible to know exactly how capable Mythos is since only a select group has access to it. But the fact that Anthropic has been able to announce specific vulnerabilities it has been able to co-develop patches for in established pieces of open source software indicates that its value as a cybersecurity tool is too significant for large IT and software firms to ignore.

The issue with making Mythos available generally is a transparency one. While Mythos is arguably the first to develop a model that can identify vulnerabilities, it is likely that other models with these capabilities could appear eventually. Anthropic's logic with Project Glasswing is that if the companies and individuals developing these foundational systems have access, they can get a head start in plugging vulnerabilities before attackers gain access to Mythos-class models and start attempting cyberattacks with these capabilities.

What are the implications for India? Is the government doing anything? The Indian IT industry relies on a range of foreign platforms and software, and often builds its own bespoke software solutions. IT Project Glasswing finds a wide range of bugs before Mythos-class models are publicly released. Indian companies would benefit by patching all the software they use in time. However, their own software may be vulnerable to sophisticated attacks. No Indian IT firm has been publicly listed as a Project Glasswing partner as yet. The Data Security Council of India under Narsimhan has been holding meetings on Mythos over the last weeks, its CEO Vinay Prasad told *The Hindu*. The IT Ministry and its subordinate Indian Computer Emergency Response Team have been studying the implications of Mythos, a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

What is the SIR controversy in West Bengal?

How many names have been deleted from the electoral rolls, and why? What are the logical discrepancies identified by the EC? Why were large numbers of voters placed under adjudication, and how was this resolved? How has the SIR process reshaped the State's political contest?

Keenamma Chakraborty

The story so far

What began as an exercise aimed at cleaning up electoral rolls, by removing duplicate, migrated, and deceased voters, and identifying "illegitimate voters", has turned into a major controversy in West Bengal. The Election Commission of India (ECI)'s Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has been conducted in 13 States and Union Territories so far. However, it is in West Bengal that terms such as "adjudication", "logical discrepancies" and "voter tribunals" have cropped up. The SIR process has also led to a "trust deficit" between the EC, a constitutional body, and the elected Trinamool Congress government, according to the Supreme Court.

How has the SIR impacted the electoral rolls of West Bengal? The SIR began in West Bengal on November 4, 2020, with 7.66 crore voters on the list. The draft rolls published on December 16 showed that over 63 lakh names had been deleted, bringing down the number of voters to around 7 crore. The deleted names, which included under-18s, AMRs (absent, shifted, dead, and duplicated)



People gather to appear before a tribunal over a dispute related to the SIR, ahead of the West Bengal Assembly elections, at Alipore, in Kolkata. PTI

The judicial officers struck down 27 lakh of the 60 lakh names. These whose names have not been cleared can now approach the 19 special tribunals set up by the EC.

category. However, of the 7 crore in the draft list, 30 lakh names were categorized as "unmapped voters" (or link with the list SIR conducted in 2002) and 1.20 crore names with logical discrepancies.

What is the logical discrepancy category? What was the result of the exercise? Voters under the logical discrepancy category were checked against a highly contentious five-point list even if they were mapped to the 2002 SIR list. Under a new AI algorithm, the EC identified five types of discrepancies: (a) spelling differences in names between 2002 and 2020 rolls; (b) cases where more than six voters linked themselves to a single ancestor; (c) age gaps between a voter and their parent falling beyond the 15-45 year range; (d) cases where the differences between the grandparents' age and the voters' age was less than 40 years; and (e) instances where the voters' gender did not align with the name provided.

The SIR began in West Bengal on November 4, 2020, with 7.66 crore voters on the list. The draft rolls published on December 16 showed that over 63 lakh names had been deleted, bringing down the number of voters to around 7 crore. The deleted names, which included under-18s, AMRs (absent, shifted, dead, and duplicated)

What happened to voters placed in the "under adjudication" category? The Supreme Court in March took the "under adjudication" decision to involve the judiciary in the SIR process saying the persistent "trust deficit" between the Bharatiya Janata Party government and the EC had led to a "stalemate", with time running out.

How was the U.S.-Iran ceasefire deal reached?

How did the two-week ceasefire come about and how did Pakistan become involved in mediation? Why has Israel reacted negatively to the U.S.-Iran ceasefire negotiations? What is happening in Islamabad now, and what are the chances of the talks succeeding?

Kallid Bhattacharjee

The story so far

In the early hours of Saturday, an Iranian delegation, led by the speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, reached Islamabad and was welcomed by Field Marshal Asim Munir and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq. The delegation was followed by the arrival of the U.S. negotiating team, led by Special Representative Vance, special envoy Steve Witkov, and Jared Kushner, son-in-law of U.S. President Donald Trump. The mediated talks between the U.S. and Iran are aimed at cementing a permanent ceasefire, following the two-week ceasefire declared earlier last week.

How did the two-week ceasefire between the U.S. and Iran come about? On March 24, *The New York Times* reported that the U.S. had sent Iran a 13-point plan to end the war, more than three weeks after the U.S., along with Israel, had started bombing the country. The publication said that the plan was handed over to the Iranian side by Pakistan's Gen. Musharraf. It is believed that Iran, in contact with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the powerful Islamic militant force of Iran that emerged more powerful in Iran after Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was assassinated by a U.S. air-strike earlier.

As back-channel discussions progressed, President Trump said the deal was struck on April 8 that Washington would halt its attacks on Iran and observe a two-week ceasefire, provided

During the war waged by the U.S. and Israel on Iran, Pakistan repeatedly condemned Israel, but maintained channels with Iran, Gulf monarchies, and the U.S.

Tehran agreed to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Mr. Trump referred to the proposal as a "double-sided ceasefire", indicating that it would include concessions by both sides. He claimed that the U.S. has achieved its military objectives and that the ceasefire is "in the best interests of the world".

Mr. Trump had earlier warned in a social media post that a ceasefire could be "wiped out". Before that, he had posted a profanity-laden message indicating his frustration over Iran's unwillingness to accept the U.S. terms. He had set a deadline for his final decision: 8 p.m. (IST) on April 7. Before the ceasefire, he had started bombing the country.

Connecting with his announcement, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran would not attack the U.S. and Israel provided they withdrew their missiles from the region. Minutes before Mr. Trump's deadline, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif posted on X that Iran and the U.S. "along with their allies, have agreed to a ceasefire every year, including Lebanon and elsewhere, after a mutually-agreed process".

What are the chances of the negotiations succeeding? The main challenge comes from Israel, which has remained openly in the ceasefire. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's political rivals have said the ceasefire is "not in the best interests of the world".

Iran has been exchanging messages with Iran, Israel had explicitly described the war as strategic objective "regional" change in Iran. With the U.S. opening negotiations with the same Iranian delegation, the deal was struck. Iran has not achieved Israel's stated strategic objectives.

Now after the announcement of the ceasefire, Israel bombed nearly 100 targets in Beirut, claiming they were Hezbollah command-and-control centres. The attacks seemed aimed at provoking Iran and undermining the fragile ceasefire. However, Iran has not abandoned its allies in Lebanon.

Italy and Spain have condemned Israel's bombing and have called on the country to support the ceasefire framework being negotiated in Pakistan. Gulf Cooperation Council states have broadly expressed support for de-escalation efforts, although Iran continues to face a trust deficit with the U.S.

Why was Pakistan chosen by the U.S. for negotiations? Pakistan has a long history of being an intermediary in U.S. diplomatic initiatives. It enabled the U.S.-China outreach in 1971 and the 2001 India deal between the U.S. and the Taliban. During the war waged by the U.S. and Israel on Iran, Pakistan repeatedly condemned

adjudication would be added in subsequent supplementary lists. Thus, the over 60 lakh "under adjudication" cases were heard by nearly 700 judicial officers from West Bengal and neighbouring Odisha and Jharkhand.

How many names were cleared by the judicial officers? What is the status of those whose names did not make it? The judicial officers struck down 27 lakh of the 60 lakh names. These whose names have not been cleared can now approach the 19 special tribunals set up by the EC. However, with the EC freezing electoral rolls for the upcoming elections, these people are unlikely to get to vote in the upcoming Assembly polls even if their names are cleared by the tribunals. A window of hope remains in the April 13 hearing in the Supreme Court, however.

So far, the total number of names deleted from the pre-SIR 2020 list is 60.3 lakh. The number of eligible voters in Bengal is 6.77 crore. What has been the political fallout? While the BJP, the main Opposition in the State, has strongly backed the process, the Trinamool has questioned the High and low of the process. Initially, the party had protested against the short timeline for the exercise, arguing it would lead to errors. However, since the process began, the SIR has become the main electoral check in the Assembly polls, with the Trinamool accusing the EC of playing the BJP's game and trying to disempower people who are loyal voters of the BJP. The Trinamool has repeatedly approached the EC as well as the Supreme Court with Mr. Banerjee herself appearing before the apex court to argue her case.

What are the other issues flagged by civil society and opposition? What is the role of civil society activists such as Vagishra Vadav and Prashant Bhushan have attacked the Bengal list accusing the EC of "deliberately" targeting Muslim voters. At a press conference in Delhi, Mr. Vadav said, "It is not revision, it is erasure".

He gave the example of North Bengal, where he said 28% of the voters are Muslim. "90% of delinquents were Muslim voters," he noted. The maximum number of voters have been deleted from Murshidabad, Malda and Uttar Dinajpur districts, which are predominantly Muslim in composition. He also said women have been targeted, especially in the

Is Pakistan playing an independent role as a mediator? Multiple regional and global stakeholders have been involved in opening informal communication channels at the U.S.-Iran war against Iran escalated into a wider regional conflict following the disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. With concerns about the safety of South Asian shipping in the Gulf, and about energy security needs at home, multiple South Asian countries, including Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and India, began talking to regional leaders. Though the initial exchange of the U.S.-13-point and Iran's 10-point conditions reportedly took place through Pakistan's military channels, the final draft shared globally through Mr. Sharif's social media accounts referred to a "draft", which was widely interpreted on social media as indicating the involvement of external parties, including the U.S., in shaping the formulation.

What has been the role of other powers, such as China and Russia, in this ceasefire? Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has repeatedly thanked China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and Qatar for "their invaluable and full support in the direction of achieving a ceasefire and granting an opportunity to seek a comprehensive and final solution through peaceful diplomatic efforts." President Trump has also thanked China for playing a role in convincing Iran to come to the negotiating table.

Why will be the modality of negotiations? Unlike previous resolutions in the cases of Afghanistan and China, the meeting this time is taking place in Islamabad because of security risks involved in the process. Israel has harassed negotiators in the past, such as on September 9, 2020, when it attacked the negotiating team of Hamas in Doha, killing five members. Security risks also stem from Pakistan's own home-grown terror outfits. A local holiday was declared in Islamabad before the arrival of the delegation. The White House said on Saturday that the U.S., Iran, and Pakistan had bilateral face-to-face talks. According to a report on Iran's state-owned Press TV, discussions began on a political level and entered the expert-level phase, involving economic, military, legal and nuclear aspects. Mr. Trump said on April 8 that he wanted long-term peace in West Asia. Iran despite allegations that Israel had violated the truce, stuck to the talks. Now, they have a narrow the wide gaps between their respective proposals to find common ground.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with the Iranian delegation led by Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, in Islamabad. PTI

What is Anthropic's Claude Mythos model?

Is Mythos really that capable? Why is the LLM not being made available to the public? What is Project Clearwing?

Answer

The story so far:

In April 2023, Anthropic, the AI company behind the coding and productivity-focused Large Language Model (LLM) model Claude, announced Mythos. This is its most powerful model yet, capable of finding bugs in old software that has not been flagged by humans as its. Anthropic said that it would not release the LLM widely, but only to a consortium of over 40 companies, which will use it to scan decades-old code to find software vulnerabilities not detected by humans yet.

What is Claude and why is it a notable product to AI circles? Claude is an LLM developed by San Francisco-based Anthropic, the OpenAI's GPT-3 and Google's Gemini. However, its reputation for quality outputs in fields such as coding has led it a reputation unlike any other LLM on the market. Claude runs through a command-line interface as well as a suite of apps for different platforms, published by Anthropic. Its increasing range of capabilities, which are critical to computing code and performing tasks specifically. AI firms often don't open source their models, restricting access by limiting access to use and employing subscription or usage-based pricing for users.

While Mythos is arguably the first to develop a model that can identify vulnerabilities, other models with these capabilities could appear eventually. In spite of operational requirements in the hopes of coming out on top in the AI race, Anthropic is not an outlier, since it does not make profits, but its usage limits and pricing are the subject of frequent complaints among users.

How is Mythos Different from Claude's other models?

Claude models has been an unreserved side-effect of those models' coding prowess. Open was able to find multiple bugs in highly scrutinized pieces of open-source software, which are used in front-ends and public IT systems broadly. Human reviewers frequently find bugs, or security vulnerabilities, and they are "patched" so that attackers cannot exploit them to remotely shut down or gain access to corporate systems.

Open found bugs that humans missed, one Anthropic executive said in a call in March, leading to worries within the company that its technology could be used by hackers to exploit, rather than find and patch, vulnerabilities.

Mythos has already been able to find "hundreds" of "new" ones by vulnerabilities. Anthropic announced Project Clearwing, a dedicated cybersecurity initiative, in partnership with Microsoft, Apple, Cisco, and other companies whose products and services form the backbone of several other companies and products across cybersec.

Is Mythos really that capable? What is the problem if everyone has access?

It is not possible to know exactly how capable Mythos is since only a select group has access to it, but the fact that Anthropic has been able to announce specific vulnerabilities it has been able to so develop patches for its established pieces of open source software indicates that its value as a cybersecurity tool is too significant for large IT and software firms to ignore.

The issue with making Mythos available generally is a technical one. While Mythos is argued to be the first to develop a model that can identify vulnerabilities, it is likely that other models with these capabilities will appear eventually. Anthropic's logic with Project Clearwing is that if the companies and individuals developing these foundational systems have access, they can get a head start in plugging vulnerabilities before attackers gain access to Mythos (the model) and start attempting cyberattacks with these capabilities.

What are the implications for India in the government being anything?

The Indian IT industry relies on a range of foreign hardware and software, and while India has its own bespoke software solutions, if Project Clearwing finds a wide range of bugs in the Mythos-like models proliferate, Indian companies would benefit by pushing all the software they use to zero. However, that new software may be vulnerable to sophisticated attackers. The Indian IT firm has been publicly listed as a Project Clearwing partner so far. The Data Security Council of India under Nandan has been holding meetings on Mythos over the last week, its CEO Vipul Gumber told The Hindu. The IT Ministry and its subordinate Indian Computer Emergency Response Team have been studying the implications of Mythos, a senior government official told The Hindu.

- **Anthropic** (AI company behind Claude) announced **Claude Mythos** — its most powerful LLM yet, capable of finding previously undetected bugs in decades-old software.
- **Anthropic** (Claude के पीछे AI कंपनी) ने **Claude Mythos** की घोषणा की — अब तक का सबसे शक्तिशाली LLM, जो दशकों पुराने सॉफ्टवेयर में पहले से अज्ञात बग खोजने में सक्षम।
- Anthropic announced **Project Glasswing** — a defensive cybersecurity initiative with Microsoft, Apple, Cisco and other companies — using Mythos to find vulnerabilities before attackers exploit them.
- Anthropic ने **Project Glasswing** की घोषणा की — Microsoft, Apple, Cisco और अन्य कंपनियों के साथ एक रक्षात्मक साइबर सुरक्षा पहल।
- Mythos has already found "**hundreds**" of severe security vulnerabilities in open-source software — raising questions about public release.
- Mythos ने पहले से ही ओपन-सोर्स सॉफ्टवेयर में "**सैकड़ों**" गंभीर सुरक्षा कमजोरियां खोजी हैं।
- **India's IT Ministry and CERT-In** are actively studying the implications of Mythos — directly relevant to India's digital infrastructure.
- **भारत का IT मंत्रालय और CERT-In** Mythos के निहितार्थों का सक्रिय रूप से अध्ययन कर रहे हैं।
- This raises the "**AI race**" dilemma: Should powerful AI tools be publicly released even if they could enable cyberattacks?
- यह "**AI दौड़**" दुविधा उठाता है: क्या शक्तिशाली AI उपकरण सार्वजनिक रूप से जारी किए जाने चाहिए, भले ही वे साइबर हमलों को सक्षम कर सकें?

- **Claude** is an AI chatbot/LLM (Large Language Model) made by Anthropic — competes with ChatGPT (OpenAI) and Gemini (Google); runs as Haiku, Sonnet, and Opus versions.
- **Claude** Anthropic द्वारा बनाया गया एक AI चैटबॉट/LLM (बड़ा भाषा मॉडल) है — ChatGPT (OpenAI) और Gemini (Google) के साथ प्रतिस्पर्धा; Haiku, Sonnet, और Opus संस्करण।
- **Claude Mythos** is an even more powerful version being kept restricted — not for general public — because it can find security holes in software that even human experts missed for decades.
- **Claude Mythos** और भी शक्तिशाली संस्करण है जिसे प्रतिबंधित रखा जा रहा है — क्योंकि यह ऐसी सुरक्षा खामियां खोज सकता है जो मानव विशेषज्ञ भी दशकों तक नहीं खोज पाए।
- **Project Glasswing** is Anthropic's plan to use Mythos to find these bugs first and help companies fix them — before hackers find them.
- **Project Glasswing** Anthropic की योजना है कि Mythos का उपयोग करके पहले इन बग्स को खोजें और कंपनियों को उन्हें ठीक करने में मदद करें — हैकर्स के खोजने से पहले।
- The risk: If Mythos gets into wrong hands, it could be used to attack rather than defend critical software infrastructure.
- जोखिम: यदि Mythos गलत हाथों में पड़ जाए, तो इसका उपयोग महत्वपूर्ण सॉफ्टवेयर बुनियादी ढाँचे पर हमला करने के लिए किया जा सकता है।
- India is concerned because its IT sector, government systems, and banking rely heavily on open-source and foreign software — which Mythos has already found vulnerabilities in.
- भारत चिंतित है क्योंकि इसका IT क्षेत्र, सरकारी प्रणाली और बैंकिंग ओपन-सोर्स और विदेशी सॉफ्टवेयर पर निर्भर करते हैं।

Player / पक्ष	Role / भूमिका
Anthropic	San Francisco-based AI company; developed Claude family; launched Mythos and Project Glasswing / Claude परिवार बनाने वाली SF स्थित AI कंपनी
Claude Mythos	Most powerful LLM by Anthropic; restricted release; finds software vulnerabilities / Anthropic का सबसे शक्तिशाली LLM; प्रतिबंधित रिलीज
Project Glasswing	Defensive cybersecurity initiative using Mythos; 40+ company consortium / Mythos का उपयोग करने वाली रक्षात्मक साइबर पहल
Microsoft, Apple, Cisco	Project Glasswing partners; their products scan for vulnerabilities / Project Glasswing भागीदार
OpenAI (ChatGPT)	Anthropic's key competitor in LLM space / LLM क्षेत्र में Anthropic का प्रमुख प्रतिस्पर्धी
Google (Gemini)	Another major LLM competitor / एक अन्य प्रमुख LLM प्रतिस्पर्धी
CERT-In	India's Computer Emergency Response Team; studying Mythos implications / भारत की CERT; Mythos के निहितार्थों का अध्ययन
DSCI (Data Security Council of India)	Indian industry body for data protection; Vinay Godse raised India's concerns / भारतीय डेटा सुरक्षा उद्योग निकाय
Nasscom	India's IT industry association; involved in the discussion / भारत का IT उद्योग संघ

- **Anthropic:** Founded 2021; HQ San Francisco; founders include Dario Amodei (CEO) and Daniela Amodei (President) — former OpenAI researchers.
- **Anthropic:** 2021 में स्थापित; HQ सैन फ्रांसिस्को; संस्थापक Dario Amodei (CEO) और Daniela Amodei (President) — पूर्व OpenAI शोधकर्ता।
- **OpenAI:** Founded 2015; HQ San Francisco; CEO Sam Altman; developed ChatGPT, GPT-4.
- **OpenAI:** 2015 में स्थापित; CEO सैम ऑल्टमैन; ChatGPT, GPT-4 विकसित।
- **Nasscom:** National Association of Software and Services Companies; HQ New Delhi; apex IT industry body in India.
- **Nasscom:** सॉफ्टवेयर और सेवा कंपनियों का राष्ट्रीय संघ; HQ नई दिल्ली; भारत में शीर्ष IT उद्योग निकाय।
- **DSCI (Data Security Council of India):** Set up by Nasscom; promotes data protection practices in India.
- **DSCI:** Nasscom द्वारा स्थापित; भारत में डेटा संरक्षण प्रथाओं को बढ़ावा देता है।
- **MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology):** Nodal ministry for IT, AI, and cybersecurity policy in India.
- **MeitY:** भारत में IT, AI और साइबर सुरक्षा नीति के लिए नोडल मंत्रालय।

Consider the following statements about Claude Mythos, Project Glasswing, and India's AI-cybersecurity posture: Claude Mythos, Project Glasswing और भारत की AI-साइबर सुरक्षा स्थिति के बारे में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार करें:

1. Claude Mythos is being made freely available to the general public as Anthropic's flagship product. Claude Mythos को Anthropic के प्रमुख उत्पाद के रूप में आम जनता के लिए स्वतंत्र रूप से उपलब्ध कराया जा रहा है।
2. Project Glasswing is a defensive cybersecurity initiative involving a consortium of over 40 companies, including Microsoft, Apple, and Cisco. Project Glasswing एक रक्षात्मक साइबर सुरक्षा पहल है जिसमें Microsoft, Apple और Cisco सहित 40 से अधिक कंपनियों का एक संघ शामिल है।
3. India's CERT-In and IT Ministry have been studying the implications of Claude Mythos for Indian cybersecurity. भारत का CERT-In और IT मंत्रालय भारतीय साइबर सुरक्षा के लिए Claude Mythos के निहितार्थों का अध्ययन कर रहे हैं।
4. Claude's product family, in increasing order of sophistication, comprises Haiku, Sonnet, and Opus. बढ़ती परिष्कृतता के क्रम में Claude का उत्पाद परिवार Haiku, Sonnet और Opus से बना है।

Which of the statements are correct? कौन से कथन सही हैं?

IN BRIEF



Centre hikes windfall gains tax on diesel, ATF for exports

With global crude prices still elevated, the Finance Ministry on Saturday hiked the windfall gains tax on export bonded diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) by 166% and 42%, respectively, with immediate effect. This is the first revision after the levy was scrapped on March 26. According to a set of notifications, the windfall levy on diesel would now be ₹55.5 a litre up from ₹15. Similarly, export bonded jet fuel will attract a levy of ₹42 a litre as against ₹20.8.

Orbicular's Ozempic generic gets U.S. FDA tentative nod

A generic version of Ozempic (semaglutide injection) developed by Hyderabad-based Orbicular Pharmaceutical Technologies in partnership with Florida-headquartered Apotex Corp., has received tentative approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The product will be marketed in the U.S. by Apotex, which is the ANDA applicant, complete peptide-based generic developer Orbicular said in a release.

Work resumes on Bhutan's 1,200 MW Punatsangchu hydro project after 7-year halt

Work on Bhutan's 1,200 MW Punatsangchu hydropower project has resumed after a seven-year suspension, with India's Power Minister Manohar Lal attending a key concrete pouring ceremony at the site on Saturday. The revival of the India-funded project, stalled since 2019 due to geological challenges, is seen as a major milestone in bilateral energy cooperation and is expected to pave the way for completion within five years.

Goyal holds talks with Saudi minister on strengthening supply chains

Free Trade of India

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday held talks with Saudi Arabia's Trade Minister Majid bin Abdul-

lah Al Qassabi on ways to strengthen supply chains disrupted due to the West Asia crisis, after holding talks with his counterparts from the UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait. All these countries are

Hormuz deal to shape resumption of Qatari LNG/LPG imports

The complex dynamics of who ends up controlling the strait will be key in resuming imports to India, or other countries, for that matter

M. Kalanidhan

India is looking to turn the LNG-LPG tap soon from Qatar with resumption of Qatari and Natural Gas Hardline (NGH) Puri completing a two-day visit to the country and meeting with Qatari Energy officials and responsible ministers.

Qatar was contributing some 40% of India's LNG imports that constituted half of India's natural gas consumption. India's first-ever LNG imports were intended to come from Ras Laffan, Qatar, some 28 years ago for the troubled

During Mr. Puri's recent visit to Qatar, the two sides "emphasised the need for unimpeded freedom of navigation."

will in turn affect LPG output and getting natural gas production to full potential may well address the LNG supply to a large measure. In the recent year, India's LNG import trains, out of a total of 18 in Qatar, were damaged, reportedly reducing production capacity by 17%.

"Repairs are a matter of months, probably years, while ramp up of production from the undamaged 10 trains could be a matter of weeks," says Jean-Christophe Heintz, founder at Washington LNG consulting.

Qatar's LNG production, through a Gas-to-Liquid plant, as well as through natural gas processing, the last being the biggest contributor. Qatar's LNG production, some 30% of India's LNG imports. And the current crisis has impacted India's LNG requirements, much more than expected.

Qatar has reported attacks in its CTR plant and petrochemical units that produce LPG. Fall in natural gas production, too,

'Observed three times rise in demand for domestic PNG'

Rajasthan's Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), especially, we are seeing registrations for new connections and old connections (involving dormant connections) has increased three times," he told The Hindu on the sidelines of the Petrochemical and Natural Gas Regulatory Board's Energy Security Conference here Friday.

There has been an massive surge in demand in the National Capital Region (NCR), especially, we are seeing registrations for new connections and old connections (involving dormant connections) has increased three times," he told The Hindu on the sidelines of the Petrochemical and Natural Gas Regulatory Board's Energy Security Conference here Friday.

Earlier, we were doing PNG connections in the region. Now, we have reached up to about 2,000-2,500, and going forward, considering the push, we are expecting it to increase to 3,000 per day.

On the outlook, the M3 attributed the spike in activated connections to the government's new specified timelines for permissions, addressed procedural delays and increased demand. "The best part is the rationalisation of rates. (The specified timelines for permissions, addressed procedural delays and increased demand. "The best part is the rationalisation of rates. (The

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"The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral trade and expressed optimism for early progress in the India-UAE FTA negotiations," it said.

Both sides noted the strain conflict has put on regional supply chains and stressed the need for an early recovery through coordinated efforts to ensure smooth trade flows, it said.

India's steps to support exports to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region.

After the attack launched by the U.S. and Israel on Iran, there were severe disruptions in the movement of ships in international waters, and has posed challenges for exporters to ship goods to the Gulf region, with which India had a bilateral trade of \$12.5 billion in 2024-25 (\$5.87 billion exports and \$42.67 billion imports).

Centre meets seafood exporters, offers support

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

In a meeting with seafood exporters, held here on Friday, the Union Fisheries Ministry emphasised the need for sustained market and product diversification, importance of strict regulatory compliance, including adherence to anti-biofouling, and strengthened traceability systems to find new export destinations. In a release, the Ministry said that the meeting, chaired by Union Fisheries Minister Ravi Bhatnagar Singh, also discussed strategies to expand global market reach.

The meeting noted that India's seafood exports have crossed a new milestone, growing from ₹62,000 crore last year to approximately ₹68,000 crore this year, registering net increase of about ₹6,000 crore. It was organised to provide a "structured platform" for interaction between the Government and the seafood industry and to obtain feedback from exporters on current challenges to market access, regulatory pressures and compliance requirements. It also discussed measures required for enhancing value addition.

Trust the bark or the wag of oil prices

Abhil Nallamilli

The spot oil market is bucking loudly. Last week it rallied to an all-time high of \$144, before settling at levels not seen even during the frenzied volatility of 2007-08 or the spike during the Russia-Ukraine war. Ideally that should mean stock market investors as too high oil prices even if sustained over medium-term durations may eventually lead to de-investing, and hence slow economic growth.

However, at the same time the fall in the form of the oil futures markets is suggesting strong pessimism and an optimistic picture. De-coupling this tale of contrasts holds the key to the direction of stock markets from here.

Last week, market sentiment improved after the announcement of a ceasefire in the U.S.-Israel and, in tandem, Indian benchmark stock index Nifty 50 rallied 6% - its biggest weekly gain since February 2023. In the U.S., the S&P 500 and Dow Jones rose over 3% each, marking their strongest weekly performance since the end of last year. This was in direct response to focus on directing sharply through the course of last week. The front-month Brent crude futures began to soften. The spread hit a record high of \$35.87 on April 8, signalling a disconnect between expectations

Sanction seems like this measure premiums have reportedly

50 million bpd could persist, leaving a significant supply gap. Adding to this, Middle East producers shut in about 7.5 million bpd in March due to storage constraints, with output expected to rise to 9.1 million bpd in April, according to the Energy Information Administration - highlighting the local impact of supply disruptions.

With sanctions disrupted as the reality of new oil out of the Persian Gulf has been disrupted, commodity piling up at storage hubs, reaching in futures price levels to "the top". This raises the risk of production shortfalls, further tightening prompt supply. The disruption around the Strait of Hormuz has created severe tightness in prompt supply. Buyers are scrambling for immediate, deliverable cargoes, "prompt cargoes", keeping the price elevated. On the other hand, sea-secure related optimism has compressed the geopolitical risk premium in futures. The reality, however, is far more complex, since the Brent price seems to be reflecting about 20 million barrels per day (bpd), which is nearly 20% of global crude supply. The front-month Brent crude futures began to soften. The spread hit a record high of \$35.87 on April 8, signalling a disconnect between expectations

First Indian vessel crosses Strait of Hormuz after ceasefire

Free Trade of India

NEW DELHI

An India-flagged liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker, the Jay Vikram, has crossed the Strait of Hormuz, marking the first such transit by an Indian vessel since a temporary two-week sea-secure between the United States and Iran was announced.

Ship tracking data showed the tanker moved through the strategic waterway between Friday night and Saturday morning and was located in the Gulf of Oman, east of the Strait on Saturday afternoon, as it proceeded eastwards.

The vessel movement was also confirmed by a government statement giving an update on developments in West Asia.

"The India-flagged LPG vessel Jay Vikram has safely crossed the Strait of Hormuz today (Saturday)," it stated. "The vessel is carrying approximately 20,400 tonnes of LPG cargo with 24 seafarers onboard. It is expected to arrive at Mumbai on April 15, 2025."

Jay Vikram is the ninth Indian vessel to exit the Persian Gulf since ending March, while about 18 India-flagged ships remain in the region. Rates were as high as ₹7 lakh per kilometre, compared to ₹1,000 per kilometre, he said, adding that it was among the factors which was hindering expansion."

UPI at IO: The backbone of India's digital financial ecosystem

Anal Nallamilli

A decade after its launch, India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has evolved from a simple money transfer system into the backbone of the country's digital economy, driving exponential growth in both scale and adoption.

From just 17.86 million transactions worth ₹6,352 crore in FY17, UPI has surged to 218.28 billion transactions totalling more than ₹228 lakh crore in FY25, according to Transaction Data.

Monthly transactions Monthly transaction value has risen from ₹21 lakh crore in FY20 to about ₹30 lakh crore, underlining its strong post-pandemic adoption. The platform now serves around 400 million active users, with nearly 250 million daily users and around 450 million monthly users, as highlighted by CBIE's ecosystem deroual Shah. UPI has gained traction in recurring payments, with close to 100 million autopay mandates and around 800 million monthly autopay debits. (The writer is with The Hindu Businessline)

UPI at 10: The backbone of India's digital financial ecosystem

Iyoti Banthia
BENGALURU

A decade after its launch, India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has evolved from a simple money transfer system into the backbone of the country's digital economy, clocking exponential growth in both scale and scope.

From just 17.86 million transactions worth ₹6,952 crore in FY17, UPI has surged to 218.98 billion transactions totalling nearly ₹285 lakh crore in FY26, according to Tracxn data.

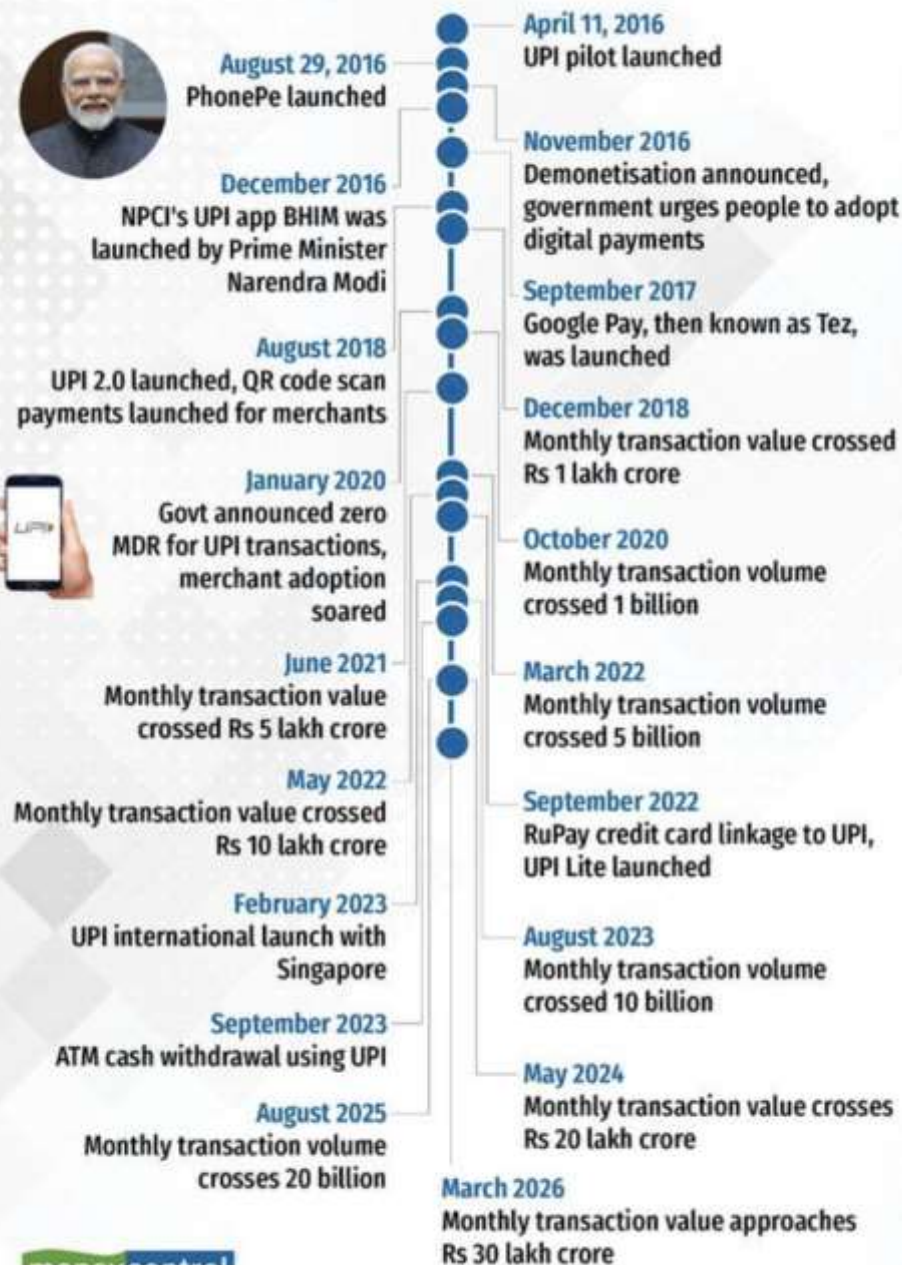
Monthly transactions

Monthly transaction value has risen from ₹21 lakh crore in FY20 to about ₹30 lakh crore, underscoring strong post-pandemic adoption. The platform now serves around 400 million active users, with nearly 250 million daily users and about 450 million monthly users, as highlighted by CRED co-founder Kunal Shah.

UPI is also gaining traction in recurring payments, with close to 100 million autopay mandates and around 500 million monthly autopay debits.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

UPI'S 10-YEAR JOURNEY



moneycontrol



- UPI completed **10 years** since its launch — evolved from a simple money transfer system to the **backbone of India's digital economy**.
- UPI ने अपने लॉन्च के बाद **10 वर्ष** पूरे किए — एक साधारण धन हस्तांतरण प्रणाली से **भारत की डिजिटल अर्थव्यवस्था की रीढ़** बन गया।
- UPI transactions surged to **218.98 billion transactions worth nearly ₹285 lakh crore in FY26** — exponential growth from **17.86 million transactions worth ₹6,952 crore in FY17**.
- UPI लेनदेन **FY26 में 218.98 बिलियन लेनदेन और लगभग ₹285 लाख करोड़** तक पहुँचा — FY17 में 17.86 मिलियन लेनदेन और ₹6,952 करोड़ से।
- UPI now serves **~400 million active users, ~250 million daily users, and ~450 million monthly users**.
- UPI अब **~400 मिलियन सक्रिय उपयोगकर्ताओं, ~250 मिलियन दैनिक उपयोगकर्ताओं और ~450 मिलियन मासिक उपयोगकर्ताओं** की सेवा करता है।
- UPI is expanding into **recurring payments** — **~100 million autopay mandates and ~500 million monthly autopay debits**.
- UPI **आवर्ती भुगतान** में विस्तार कर रहा है — **~100 मिलियन ऑटोपे मेंडेट और ~500 मिलियन मासिक ऑटोपे डेबिट**।
- UPI is being cited as a **global model** for digital public infrastructure — being exported to multiple countries.
- UPI को डिजिटल सार्वजनिक बुनियादी ढाँचे के **वैश्विक मॉडल** के रूप में उद्धृत किया जा रहा है।

- **UPI (Unified Payments Interface)** is a real-time payment system built by **NPCI (National Payments Corporation of India)** — allows instant 24×7 money transfer between bank accounts using a smartphone.
- **UPI (यूनिफाइड पेमेंट्स इंटरफेस) NPCI (नेशनल पेमेंट्स कॉर्पोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया)** द्वारा निर्मित एक रियल-टाइम भुगतान प्रणाली है — स्मार्टफोन का उपयोग करके बैंक खातों के बीच तत्काल 24×7 धन हस्तांतरण।
- Instead of typing account numbers and IFSC codes, UPI uses a simple **VPA (Virtual Payment Address)** like name@bank — making payments as easy as sending a text message.
- खाता नंबर और IFSC कोड टाइप करने के बजाय, UPI एक सरल **VPA (वर्चुअल पेमेंट एड्रेस)** जैसे name@bank का उपयोग करता है।
- UPI started in 2016 — powered by India's **JAM Trinity (Jan Dhan + Aadhaar + Mobile)** — and has become the world's largest real-time payment system by volume.
- UPI 2016 में शुरू हुआ — भारत की **JAM त्रिमूर्ति (जन धन + आधार + मोबाइल)** द्वारा संचालित — और मात्रा के हिसाब से दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी रियल-टाइम भुगतान प्रणाली बन गया।
- Its success is built on being **free, instant, interoperable** (works across all banks and apps like PhonePe, GPay, Paytm) and **accessible** even to small merchants.
- इसकी सफलता **मुफ्त, तत्काल, इंटरऑपरेबल** (सभी बैंकों और PhonePe, GPay, Paytm जैसे ऐप्स में काम करती है) और **सुलभ** होने पर बनी है।

History / इतिहास

- **Currency evolution in India:** Barter → Cowrie shells → Coins (Mauryan era) → Paper currency (British era) → Digital payments (21st century) — UPI represents the latest stage.
- **भारत में मुद्रा का विकास:** वस्तु विनिमय → कौड़ी → सिक्के (मौर्य काल) → कागजी मुद्रा (ब्रिटिश काल) → डिजिटल भुगतान — UPI नवीनतम चरण।
- **Demonetisation (November 8, 2016):** Banned ₹500 and ₹1000 notes — massive catalyst for UPI adoption; UPI launched just months earlier (April 2016).
- **विमुद्रीकरण (8 नवंबर 2016):** ₹500 और ₹1000 नोट प्रतिबंधित — UPI अपनाने का बड़ा उत्प्रेरक; UPI कुछ महीने पहले ही लॉन्च हुआ (अप्रैल 2016)।

Geography / भूगोल

- **UPI's international footprint:** Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka (South Asia); Singapore, Malaysia (Southeast Asia); UAE (West Asia); France, UK (Europe) — India's digital reach spreading globally.
- **UPI की अंतर्राष्ट्रीय उपस्थिति:** नेपाल, भूटान, श्रीलंका; सिंगापुर, मलेशिया; UAE; फ्रांस, UK।
- **Digital divide:** Rural-urban gap in UPI adoption — states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana lead; northeastern states and rural UP, Bihar lag.
- **डिजिटल विभाजन:** UPI अपनाने में ग्रामीण-शहरी अंतर — महाराष्ट्र, कर्नाटक आगे; उत्तर-पूर्व और ग्रामीण UP, Bihar पीछे।

Comparable Payment Systems Globally:

- **Brazil — PIX** (launched 2020): Near-UPI adoption rate
- **EU — SEPA Instant:** European instant payments
- **Singapore — PayNow:** Real-time payments
- **USA — FedNow (2023):** Just launched; far behind UPI in adoption
- **China — Alipay/WeChat Pay:** Private; not interoperable like UPI

CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency) — e-Rupee:

- Launched by RBI in pilot form (2022-23)
- Two types: Wholesale (e₹-W) and Retail (e₹-R)
- Future integration with UPI being explored
- RBI द्वारा 2022-23 में पायलट रूप में शुरू; UPI के साथ एकीकरण की खोज



PROTESTERS EXPLOSION
BJP chief slams DMK government in T.N.
ASSEMBLY POLLS • PAGE 8



TRAFALGAR AT 163
163 children rescued in M.P., eight men held
MINDS • PAGE 4



PROTESTERS THUNDER
Nepal PM to visit India soon, says FM Khanal
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DEED FOR CAIR
Definitation is the issue, not women's quota
More can be extremely dangerous, says Sostin
EDITORIAL • PAGE 8



FOURER ASSIST
Salt and Patidar help RCB get back on track
SPORTS • PAGE 24

INSIDE



Ukraine, Russia trade barbs over truce violations

KIEV Ukraine and Russia traded barbs on Sunday over alleged truce violations in the east of the country. Ukraine's Foreign Minister said the truce was broken by Russian forces on Sunday.



Cong. MLAs head to Delhi seeking a reorg of Cabinet

NEW DELHI A group of Congress MLAs from various states are expected to arrive in Delhi on Sunday to demand a reshuffle in the government's Cabinet.

Student's death raises concern over 'caste bias'

HYDRABAD The suspected campus assault of a student at the Jagananna Chaitanya College in the district of Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, has caused a public outcry over alleged caste discrimination.

Dhaka to send a delegation for China outreach

NEW DELHI The newly elected Bangladesh government will send a 20-member delegation to Beijing this month to begin the process of normalising relations with the country.

China's 'fictional' reserves rejected by India

NEW DELHI India on Sunday rejected a report of China's foreign exchange reserves, saying the figures were inflated to show the country's economic strength.

Iran, U.S. blame each other as talks fail

Talks collapsed over Iran's refusal to abandon nuclear weapons, says U.S. after 28 hours of talks | Iran blames 'U.S. overreach' for the breakdown; the U.S. insists Iran end its nuclear programme | Iran is not seeking weapons, but has the right to nuclearise the country, says Iranian official

Associated Press

Talks between Iran and the United States on Sunday failed to reach an agreement, each side blaming the other for the breakdown. Iran's Foreign Minister said the talks collapsed over the U.S. refusal to abandon its demand for Iran to give up its nuclear weapons, while Iranian officials blamed the "U.S. overreach" for the breakdown of the talks without reaching a deal.

Iranian officials said they were not seeking nuclear weapons, but they had the right to nuclearise the country. The U.S. insists Iran end its nuclear programme.

Hanging in the balance

The breakdown of talks between the two sides over the issue of the nuclear programme has left the world in a state of uncertainty.



Iranian officials (left) and U.S. representatives (right) in talks.

Iranian officials said they were not seeking nuclear weapons, but they had the right to nuclearise the country. The U.S. insists Iran end its nuclear programme.

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Trump threatens to block the Strait of Hormuz

The U.S. has threatened to block the Strait of Hormuz if Iran does not agree to a deal.



The Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway in the Persian Gulf, is a vital oil route.

The U.S. has threatened to block the Strait of Hormuz if Iran does not agree to a deal. The U.S. insists Iran end its nuclear programme.

Iran is not seeking weapons, but has the right to nuclearise the country, says Iranian official

Iranian officials said they were not seeking nuclear weapons, but they had the right to nuclearise the country. The U.S. insists Iran end its nuclear programme.

Wall of uniforms



Protesters in West Bengal have set up a wall of uniforms in a protest against the death of a student from Tangra in West Bengal.

Electorate falls by 10.2% in nine States, three U.T.s after revision of poll rolls

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Across the nine States and three Union Territories, the number of voters has fallen by 10.2% after the revision of the poll rolls. The number of voters has fallen by 10.2% after the revision of the poll rolls.



A group of people in a meeting.

A total of 10.2% of the electorate were removed following the revision of the poll rolls. The number of voters has fallen by 10.2% after the revision of the poll rolls.

West Bengal recorded the highest drop of 10.8%. The number of voters has fallen by 10.2% after the revision of the poll rolls.

According to the EC, the number of voters has fallen by 10.2% after the revision of the poll rolls. The number of voters has fallen by 10.2% after the revision of the poll rolls.

Asha Bhosle, legendary playback singer, dies in Mumbai at the age of 92

Chinmay Chakravarty

MUMBAI

Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle died in Mumbai on Sunday. She was 92.

She had been in poor health for some time.

She had been in poor health for some time. She had been in poor health for some time.

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Asha Bhosle (left) and her husband, Usha.

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Iran, U.S. blame each other as talks fail

Talks collapsed over Iran's refusal to abandon nuclear weapon, says U.S. after 21-hours of talks

Iran blames 'U.S. overreach' for the breakdown; the U.S. insists Iran end its nuclear programme

Iran is not seeking weapons, but has the right to nuclear energy, a diplomatic official states

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

The United States and Iran ended face-to-face talks in Pakistan on Sunday without an agreement, each side keeping the onus on the other without narrowing their differences and leaving a fragile two-week ceasefire in the war in West Asia in doubt.

U.S. officials said the talks collapsed over Iran's refusal to commit to abandoning the path to a nuclear weapon, while Iranian officials blamed the "U.S. overreach" for the breakdown of the talks without mentioning specific sticking points.

Neither side indicated what will happen after the truce expires on April 22.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said his country will try to facilitate a new dialogue in the com-

Hanging in the balance

The breakdown of talks leaves doubt over the future of the two-week ceasefire in the war in West Asia



Winding up: Pakistan officials escort U.S. delegation leaving after the talks on Sunday. AFP



We need to see an affirmative commitment that they [Iran] will not seek a nuclear weapon
J.D. VANCE, U.S. Vice-President



It is time for the U.S. to decide whether it can gain our trust or not — MOHAMMAD BAGHER GHALIBAF, Iran Speaker



ing days. "We need to see an affirmative commitment that they will not seek a nuclear weapon, and they will not seek the tools that would enable them to quickly achieve a nuclear weapon," U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance said after the 21-hour talks.

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, who led the Iran

delegation, said it was time for the U.S. "to decide whether it can gain our trust or not".

Fragile truce

Iran had very good initiatives to show goodwill in talks, which led to progress in the negotiations, the Iranian Speaker said in comments carried by state media on Sunday.

Iranian officials earlier said the talks fell apart over two or three key issues, without specifying them, blaming what they called U.S. overreach.

"It is imperative that the parties continue to uphold their commitment to cease fire," Pakistan's Foreign Minister said.

Iran has long denied seeking nuclear weapons

Trump threatens to blockade the Strait of Hormuz

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON U.S. President Donald Trump on Sunday said on his Truth Social platform that the U.S. Navy would "immediately" begin a blockade to stop ships from entering or leaving the Strait of Hormuz, after U.S.-Iran peace talks in Pakistan ended without agreement. » PAGE 14

but has insisted on its right to a civilian nuclear programme. It has offered "affirmative commitments" in the past in writing, including in the landmark 2015 nuclear deal.

Experts say its stockpile of enriched uranium, though not weapons-grade, is only a short technical step away.

Since the U.S. and Israel

launched the war on February 28, it has killed at least 3,000 people in Iran, 2,020 in Lebanon, 23 in Israel, and more than a dozen in Gulf Arab states, and caused lasting damage to infrastructure in half-a-dozen West Asian countries.

Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz has largely cut off the Persian Gulf and its oil and gas exports from the global economy, sending energy prices soaring.

The deadlock – and Mr. Vance's take-it-or-leave-it proposal that Iran end its nuclear programme – mirrored February's nuclear talks in Switzerland.

Though United States President Donald Trump has said the subsequent war was meant to compel Iran's leaders to abandon nuclear ambitions, each side's positions appeared unchanged in negotiations following six weeks of fighting. An Iranian diplo-

matic official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, denied that negotiations had failed over Iran's nuclear ambitions.

"Iran is not seeking to acquire nuclear weapons, but it has the right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes," the official said, reiterating Iran's longstanding negotiating position. There was no word on whether they would resume, though Iran said it was open to continuing the dialogue, Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported.

The U.S. and Iran entered talks with sharply different proposals and contrasting assumptions about their leverage to end the war. Before negotiations began, the ceasefire was already threatened by deep disagreements and Israel's continued attacks against the Iranian-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon.

5 POINTS ON WHICH TALKS BROKE DOWN



400 kg Fate of 'near-bomb-grade' uranium remains unresolved



\$27 billion Dispute over release of Iran's frozen assets

6 weeks

Who pays for damage from weeks of air strikes?



0 delay

US wants strait of Hormuz fully open immediately



2 weeks Scope of truce unclear — does it cover Lebanon or not?

History / इतिहास

- **NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, 1968):** Divides world into Nuclear Weapon States (NWS: P5) and Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS); allows civilian nuclear energy for all; prohibits weapons for NNWS.
- **NPT (परमाणु अप्रसार संधि, 1968):** दुनिया को परमाणु हथियार राज्यों (P5) और गैर-परमाणु हथियार राज्यों में विभाजित; सभी के लिए नागरिक परमाणु ऊर्जा; NNWS के लिए हथियार निषिद्ध।
- **Iran's nuclear history:** Shah era began civilian programme with U.S. help (1950s-70s); post-1979 revolution, programme continued secretly; IAEA discovered violations in 2002-03.
- **ईरान का परमाणु इतिहास:** शाह काल में अमेरिकी सहायता से नागरिक कार्यक्रम (1950-70); 1979 क्रांति के बाद, कार्यक्रम गुप्त रूप से जारी; IAEA ने 2002-03 में उल्लंघन खोजे।
- **JCPOA (2015):** Iran agreed to reduce enrichment to 3.67%, reduce stockpile, allow IAEA inspections → U.S. lifted sanctions. Trump withdrew 2018 → Iran gradually abandoned commitments.
- **JCPOA (2015):** ईरान 3.67% तक संवर्धन घटाने, IAEA निरीक्षण पर सहमत → अमेरिका ने प्रतिबंध हटाए। ट्रम्प ने 2018 में वापसी ली → ईरान ने धीरे-धीरे प्रतिबद्धताएं छोड़ीं।
- **Historical U.S.-Iran Chronology:**
 - 1953: CIA-backed coup overthrew PM Mosaddegh
 - 1979: Islamic Revolution; U.S. Embassy hostage crisis
 - 1988: USS Vincennes shot down Iran Air Flight 655
 - 2015: JCPOA signed
 - 2018: U.S. withdrew from JCPOA
 - 2020: U.S. killed Gen. Soleimani; Iran attacked U.S. bases in Iraq

Science & Tech / विज्ञान-प्रौद्योगिकी

- **Uranium enrichment levels:**
 - Natural uranium: ~0.7% U-235
 - Civilian reactor grade: ~3-5%
 - Research reactor: ~20% (HEU threshold)
 - Iran's current: ~60%
 - Weapons-grade: ~90%+
 - **Breakout time** (time to make one bomb's worth of HEU): Experts estimate Iran is weeks away.
 - **ब्रेकआउट समय** (एक बम के लिए HEU बनाने का समय): विशेषज्ञों का अनुमान ईरान कुछ सप्ताह दूर।
- **IRGC's asymmetric capabilities:** Drones (Shahed series), mines in Hormuz, ballistic missiles, cruise missiles — not matching U.S. conventionally but creating deterrence.
- **IRGC की असममित क्षमताएं:** ड्रोन (शाहेद श्रृंखला), होर्मुज में खदानें, बैलिस्टिक मिसाइल।
- **Centrifuge technology:** Iran uses IR-1, IR-2m, IR-6 centrifuges at Natanz for enrichment — IR-6 are 10x more efficient than IR-1.
- **सेंट्रीफ्यूज तकनीक:** ईरान नतांज में IR-1, IR-2m, IR-6 सेंट्रीफ्यूज का उपयोग संवर्धन के लिए।

F3. Future Implications / भविष्य के प्रभाव

- **Best case:** Pakistan brokers new round; ceasefire extended; both sides find face-saving formula similar to JCPOA but with stronger verification.
- **सर्वोत्तम परिदृश्य:** पाकिस्तान नई वार्ता कराए; युद्धविराम विस्तारित; मजबूत सत्यापन के साथ JCPOA जैसा फॉर्मूला।
- **Worst case:** Ceasefire collapses on April 22; full war resumes; Iran mines Hormuz; U.S. blockades; global oil crisis; India pays catastrophic economic price.
- **सबसे खराब परिदृश्य:** 22 अप्रैल को युद्धविराम समाप्त; पूर्ण युद्ध फिर शुरू; ईरान ने होर्मुज में खदानें बिछाई; अमेरिकी नाकाबंदी; वैश्विक तेल संकट।
- **Nuclear proliferation:** If Iran weaponises → Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt may pursue weapons → regional nuclear arms race → NPT collapse.
- **परमाणु प्रसार:** यदि ईरान हथियारबंद हो → सऊदी अरब, तुर्की, मिस्र हथियार खोज सकते → क्षेत्रीय परमाणु हथियारों की दौड़ → NPT का पतन।
- **India's response:** India must accelerate strategic petroleum reserves, diversify oil sources (Russia, Canada, USA), and protect Chabahar investment through diplomacy.
- **भारत की प्रतिक्रिया:** भारत को रणनीतिक पेट्रोलियम भंडार तेज करना, तेल स्रोतों में विविधता लानी होगी।

Asha Bhosle, legendary playback singer, dies in Mumbai at the age of 92

Chinmay Gaikwad
MUMBAI

Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle died in Mumbai on Sunday. She was 92.

The singer had been admitted to the Breach Candy Hospital on Saturday evening with exhaustion and a chest infection. Hospital officials said the cause of death was multi-organ failure following a cardiac arrest.

Her son, Anand Bhosle, confirmed the news outside the hospital. He said that those who wish to pay their last respects may visit her residence on Monday at 11 a.m., and that the last rites will be performed at Shivaji Park, Dadar, at 4 p.m. with full state honours.

Ms. Bhosle, who recorded nearly 12,000 songs in over 20 Indian and foreign languages, is considered one of the most versatile voices in Indian music.

Part of heritage

Condoling the death of the singer, President Droupadi Murmu said that it has created a huge void in the world of music.

"She led her life on her own terms as an artist and as an individual. With her melodious and timeless voice, she enriched Indian music for decades," the President said.

Describing her as one of the most famous and versatile voices, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was deeply saddened by her passing.

Her musical journey enriched the country's cultural heritage and touched the hearts of millions across the world, he said.



ASHA BHOSLE (1933-2026)

Born in a musical family, she began singing at the age of 10. Her first song was *Chala Chala Nav Bala* for the 1943 Marathi film *Majha Bal*. She entered Hindi cinema five years later with *Sawan Aaya* in *Chunariya* (1948). Her work in *Naya Daur* (1957) brought her wider recognition.

Over the decades, she recorded more songs than any other female playback singer of her time. The Guinness World Records recognised her for the most studio recordings.

She was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Padma Vibhushan, and Maharashtra Bhushan. Some of her famous songs are *Chura Liya Hai Tumhe Jo Dil Ko*, *Dum Maro Dum*, *Piya Tu Ab To Aaja* and *In Aankhon Ki Masti*.

Maharashtra Governor Jishnu Dev Varma said her versatility and contribution left a lasting mark on music lovers.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said her demise marked the loss of another towering figure from the Mangeshkar family after "Lata Didi".

The Congress party condoled the demise of the le-

gendary singer, with party chief Mallikarjun Kharge saying that an era of playback singing has come to an end.

"An epitome of legendary versatility and grace, her unique style of singing was appreciated by millions across the globe," Mr. Kharge said in an X post.

Deputy Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde and Sunetra Ajit Pawar paid their tributes and mourned the demise.

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray said that despite personal hardships, she never let sorrow overpower her spirit.

Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said her songs would remain her enduring legacy.

Congress leader Sachin Sawant said she exemplified the meaning of versatility through her career.

Filmmaker Subhash Ghai and lyricist Prasoon Joshi were among those who remembered the iconic voice.

(With PTI inputs)

VOICE OF MODERN INDIA
» PAGE 6

Glorious journey

Born on September 8, 1933 in Sangli, Asha Bhosle was trained in classical music by her father, Dinanath Mangeshkar



She grew up in a deeply musical family with her siblings Lata Mangeshkar and Usha (singers), and Meena and Hridaynath (composers)

- Asha Bhosle married Ganpatrao Bhosle in 1949 when she was just 16. She later married composer R.D. Burman
- She recorded her first song at just 10 after her father's death. It was the Marathi song *Chalo Chalo Nav Bala* for *Majha Bal* in 1943
- The breakthrough came in the 1950s, especially through collaborations with O.P. Nayyar
- Her collaboration with R.D. Burman redefined Hindi film music in the 1960s and 1970s

CHARTBUSTERS

- **Abhi Na Jao Chhod Kar** (*Hum Dono*, 1961): A tender duet with Mohammed Rafi, this song captures romantic hesitation with delicacy. Its conversational rhythms made it one of Hindi cinema's most beloved love songs
- **Aaja Aaja Main Hoon Pyar Tera** (*Teesri Manzil*, 1966): A burst of rock-and-roll energy, this R.D. Burman composition pushed playback singing into Western territory. Bhosle reportedly rehearsed extensively to match its breathless tempo
- **Piya Tu Ab To Aaja** (*Caravan*, 1971): Sultry, playful, and iconic for its "Monica, O My Darling" refrain, this track redefined the cabaret song and cemented Bhosle's image as Hindi cinema's most daring voice
- **Dum Maro Dum** (*Hare Rama Hare Krishna*, 1971): A counterculture anthem that captured the hippie zeitgeist in India. Its rebellious tone gave Bhosle a new generational audience
- **Chura Liya Hai Tumhe Jo Dil Ko** (*Yaadon Ki Baaraat*, 1973): This timeless classic remains one of Bollywood's most enduring love songs
- **Yeh Mera Dil** (*Dar*, 1978): An energetic song that paired Bhosle's voice with Helen's screen presence
- **In Aankhon Ki Masti** (*Umrao Jaan*, 1982): A masterpiece in ghazal gayaki, it earned Bhosle a National Award and showcased her command over classical nuance
- **Mera Kuch Samaan** (*Ijaazat*, 1987): Minimalist and haunting, this Gulzar composition broke conventional song structure
- **Rangela Re** (*Rangela*, 1995): A reminder of Bhosle's longevity, well into her 60s, she adapted seamlessly to A.R. Rahman's modern soundscape with a youthful flair
- **Radha Kaise Na Jale** (*Lagaan*, 2001): This semi-classical piece brought Bhosle's voice to a new millennium audience, bridging generations effortlessly
- She collaborated with Boy George and Adnan Sami
- In 2011, Bhosle's name was registered in the Guinness World Records for recording the most number of studio recordings in the history of music. She recorded nearly 12,000 songs in 20 languages



Her Hindi film debut came with the song *Sawan Aaya* in *Chunariya* (1948)



ACHIEVEMENTS

■ 2000: Dadasaheb Phalke Award

■ 2008: Padma Vibhushan

■ Asha Bhosle was nominated for the **Grammy Awards in 1977** for her collaboration with Ustad Ali Akbar Khan for the album *Legacy*. In 2005, another album, *You've Stolen My Heart* by Kronos Quartet, comprising of arrangements of composer R.D. Burman and Asha, was nominated for the **Grammy**



From my side, it has always been a relationship of admiration and awe. She was truly iconic; there has never been another singer as versatile as her
USHA UTHUP

She has made many of my songs so popular with her unique voice and style. I had a very special relationship with both Lataji and Ashaji
HEMA MALINI

Today, words feel too small for the loss we feel. One moment, the heart falls silent, and the next, it drifts through the countless melodies she gifted all of us
SACHIN TENDULKAR



How does Keytruda work — how to tell real from fake

Keytruda is part of immunotherapy — an umbrella term for treatments that train the immune system to tackle disease, primarily cancers. It is a part of cancer treatment that also includes radiotherapy, chemotherapy, and if needed, surgery.

How is immunotherapy different from chemotherapy and radiation?

While chemo and radiotherapy directly kill cancer cells — and some healthy cells along with it — immunotherapy pushes the body's own immune system to recognise and kill cancer cells. Being highly targeted, immunotherapy spares healthy cells. Importantly, it has shown some remarkable results in late stage cancers, with tumours disappearing completely in some patients. These therapies have been shown to extend life even in patients with aggressive forms of cancer.

What is Keytruda's place in the category of immunotherapies?

Keytruda belongs to the category of monoclonal antibodies, which are laboratory-made molecules designed to bind with specific targets, enabling the immune system to identify and destroy cancerous cells.

The other important immunotherapy treatments are:

- CAR-T cell therapy involves collecting a patient's own T cells, engineering them to create chimeric receptors, multiplying these modified cells, and returning them to the patient. These engineered T cells can then identify, attach to, and destroy cancer cells that would normally evade immune detection.

- mRNA vaccines for cancer are currently under development. Unlike vaccines for infections given to healthy individuals, cancer vaccines are administered to pa-

tients who already have certain cancers to prevent relapse. These vaccines train the immune system to identify proteins called neoantigens found only in cancer cells. Once recognised, the immune system remembers these markers for years, continuing to fight cancer and prevent recurrence.

Are immunotherapies available in India?

Several monoclonal antibodies, including Keytruda, are available in tertiary care hospitals across India. Generic versions of some monoclonal antibodies exist, including trastuzumab and nivolumab, another PD-1 checkpoint inhibitor.

CAR-T therapy remains cost-intensive and technology-driven. ImmunoAct, an IIT-Bombay incubated startup, developed India's first indigenous CAR-T therapy called NexCar19, currently the most readily available option in the country.

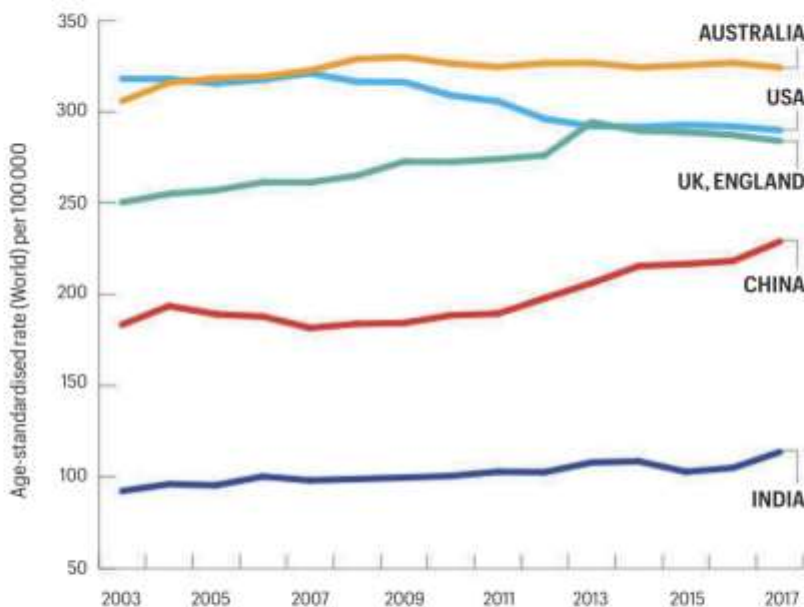
What does Keytruda cost in India? What's the standard dose? How does one get it? What kinds of health insurance cover it? Do specialised cancer care policies cover it?

Merck & Co's recommended dosage is 200 mg every three weeks. With every 100mg vial marketed at a price upwards of Rs 1.5 lakh, patients without health coverage or assistance schemes would have to spend over Rs 3 lakh every month.

Most patients in India, therefore, get the drug through the company's Patient Access Programme. This programme provides patients with 30 free vials on purchasing five initially for a total cost of around Rs 10 lakh. Patients may use a third-party health insurance to pay for the initial dose. Accessing the drug through the programme has some stipulations — the patient should not have

• CANCER OCCURRENCE PER 100,000

All sites exclude non-melanoma skin cancer



SOURCE: WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S GLOBAL CANCER OBSERVATORY

• Cancer Numbers

Country	INDIA	CHINA	AUSTRALIA	UK	US
New Cases	14,13,316	48,24,703	212332	454954	2380189
Deaths	916827	2574176	51884	181807	605761
Incidence rate*	98.5	201.6	462.5	307.8	367
Mortality rate**	64.4	96.5	84.6	98.3	82.3

*Occurrence per 100,000 population ** Cancer deaths per 100,000 population

SOURCE: GLOBOCAN, 2022

a sum-insured or income of over Rs 25 lakh.

While general health insurance policies may provide limited cover for these therapies, there are specialised cancer care policies that are designed to pay for these expensive drugs. Patients may also access the treatment through certain Government health schemes such as CGHS.

Why is Keytruda so expensive? Is a cheaper version coming?

Drugs such as Keytruda are monoclonal antibodies, which are more complex to manufacture than small-molecule medicines, such as Paracetamol. Yet, most costs arise from patent rights. Keytruda's patent expires in 2028, with several companies already developing generic versions, which could bring down costs by up to 70%.

Why is India important for Merck in the Keytruda market?

With one of the largest populations in the world and a rising cancer burden, access to immunotherapies in India remains largely constrained by cost. Although India's cancer incidence rate is currently below the global average, it is climbing steadily. The latest Global Burden of Disease estimates indicate that the rate of cancer occurrence rose from 84.8 per 100,000 population in 1990 to 107.2 per 100,000 in 2023.

Data from the WHO's Global Cancer Observatory shows that India recorded 14.13 lakh cancer cases in 2022, a figure projected to surge by 73.8% to 24.56 lakh cases by 2045. The GLOBOCAN database puts India's current incidence at 98.5 per 100,000. By contrast, Australia, which has one of the world's highest incidence rates at 462.5 per 100,000, is expected to see a comparatively modest 49.9% increase by

2045, with absolute case numbers rising from 2.12 lakh in 2022 to 3.18 lakh by 2045.

In this context, to make Keytruda more affordable, the Government decided to do away with basic custom duty on the drug last year. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her Budget speech last year that Keytruda and its patient access programme were among the 36 drugs and 13 such programmes exempt from the duty.

What is the key finding of The Indian Express investigation?

Cancer Calculus, the investigation by *The Indian Express* in association with The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), found an alarming rise of a counterfeit market in Keytruda fuelled by lack of access for most patients, and use of standardised high dosing that increases costs. It found hospital-level breaches and insider involvement, glaring loopholes in the system and how police investigators have unearthed evidence linking hospital staff to the counterfeit supply. The investigation exposes a broader systemic failure involving high drug prices, regulatory gaps and compromised hospital oversight.

For a patient who needs Keytruda and can access it, how do they ensure they are getting the genuine vial and not a counterfeit version?

The challenge is that counterfeit Keytruda is sold in genuine vials and packaging, making it very hard even for the trained eye to make a distinction. The best way to ensure that the product is genuine is to purchase from a hospital pharmacy — these drugs are mostly sold directly to the hospital by licensed distributors. Getting the drug through the patient access programme also ensures that you get genuine products.

Topic	Key Points
What is Keytruda?	A monoclonal antibody used in immunotherapy to treat cancer by boosting the immune system.
Type of Therapy	Checkpoint inhibitor (PD-1 inhibitor) – helps immune cells recognize and attack cancer cells.
How Immunotherapy Works	Trains immune system to detect cancer markers (neoantigens) and destroy tumor cells while sparing healthy cells.
Difference from Chemo/Radiation	Chemo/radiation kill both healthy & cancer cells; immunotherapy is targeted and less harmful to healthy cells .
Other Immunotherapies	CAR-T cell therapy, mRNA vaccines (under development).
Availability in India	Available in tertiary hospitals ; includes drugs like Keytruda, nivolumab, trastuzumab.
Cost in India	~₹1.5 lakh per 100 mg vial; ~₹3 lakh/month without assistance.
Dosage	Typically 200 mg every 3 weeks .
Access Support	Patient Access Program reduces cost (~₹10 lakh initial package).
Why Expensive?	Complex monoclonal antibody production + patent protection (till 2028).
Future Cost Reduction	Generics may reduce price by up to 70% after patent expiry.
India Market Importance	Large population + rising cancer burden but low access due to high cost .

Future Cost Reduction

Generics may reduce price by **up to 70%** after patent expiry.

India Market Importance

Large population + rising cancer burden but **low access due to high cost.**

Cancer Trend (India)

Incidence rising from **84.8 (1990) → 107.2 per 100,000 (2023).**

Cancer Cases (India)

~14.13 lakh cases (2022), expected **24.56 lakh by 2045.**

Counterfeit Issue

Fake Keytruda market due to high price & limited access.

Investigation Findings

Hospital-level breaches, insider involvement, regulatory loopholes.

How to Avoid Fake Drug

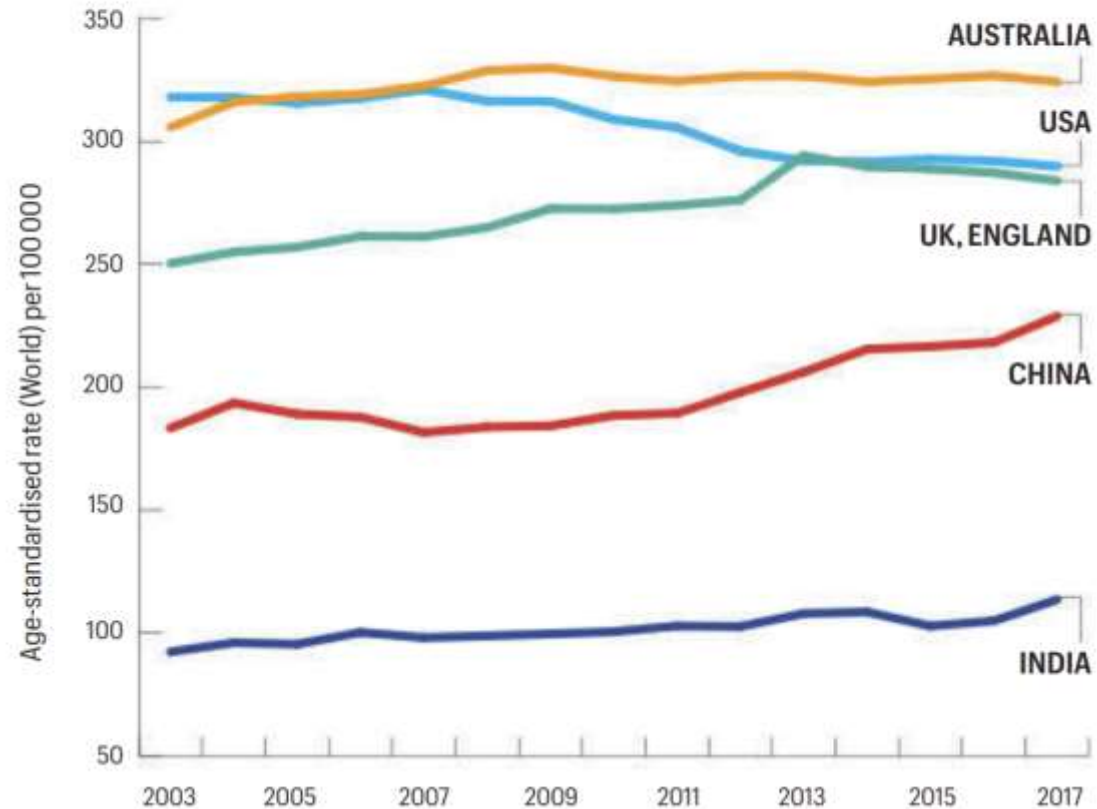
Purchase only via **hospital pharmacy / licensed distributors / official programs.**

Government Action

Customs duty removed to improve affordability.

• CANCER OCCURRENCE PER 100,000

All sites exclude non-melanoma skin cancer



SOURCE: WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S GLOBAL CANCER OBSERVATORY

• Cancer Numbers

Country	INDIA	CHINA	AUSTRALIA	UK	US
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*Occurrence per 100,000 population ** Cancer deaths per 100,000 population)

SOURCE: GLOBOCAN, 2022

Wheat exports to resume after 4-yr ban, quotas soon

SANDIP DAS
New Delhi, April 12

SEVERAL COUNTRIES INCLUDING Egypt, Indonesia, Myanmar and Bangladesh have shown interest in importing wheat after India lifted a nearly four-year-old export ban. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) is likely to allocate wheat export quotas soon, sources said.

Trade sources said that due to supply disruptions caused by geopolitical factors, wheat export prospects look promising this year. This follows the government allowing shipments of 2.5 million tonne (MT) of grain and an additional 0.5 MT of processed wheat products in February 2026, citing surplus stocks and a prospect of a record harvest.

"With Indian wheat cost and freight (CFR) rates to Bangladesh hovering around \$ 275-280 per tonne, exports appear viable and competitive. While recent unseasonal rains raise minor quality concerns, the Government approvals signal strong potential for trade, supporting farmers alike," Navneet Chitlangia, president, Roller Flour Millers' Federation of India, told *FE*.

India, the world's second-largest wheat producer after China, imposed the ban on wheat and wheat-product

MARKET RESET

■ Export quotas expected soon by DGFT

■ Surplus stocks: FCI holds about 22 MT vs 7.46 MT buffer norm

■ Record output projected: Around 120 MT wheat in FY26

■ Retail prices stable: ₹ 30.8 per kg, 3% y-o-y decline



exports in May 2022 due to concerns over food security, a smaller harvest, and rising inflation.

At the beginning of April, FCI held over 22 MT of wheat stock against a buffer of 7.46 MT. Trade analysts say this comfortable stock position has contributed to price stability in retail markets.

The average retail price of wheat according to the

Department of Consumer Affairs, was Rs 30.81/kg, a marginal decline of 3% year-on-year.

Chitlangia also stated that recent unseasonal rains, hailstorms, and associated winds have impacted wheat crops across 9 states and 152 districts, affecting over 4.2 million hectares. "This has caused qualitative losses of 20-30% in affected areas—primarily grain discolouration, loss of lustre, and elevated moisture content—along with a quantitative loss of 2 MT," he said.

The Agriculture Ministry has projected a record 120 MT of wheat output in the 2025-2026 crop years (July-June), trade sources said this output is definitely higher than the 117 MT from the 2024-25 crop year.

The area under wheat this season has increased to 33.41 million hectares (mha), 3% higher than last year, exceeding the normal sown area of 31.2 mha. Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has stated that unseasonal rains and hailstorms have damaged standing rabi crops across 0.24 million hectares so far in several states, with the wheat crop being the most affected.

The government is aiming to buy over 30 MT of wheat from farmers in key producing states during the 2026-27.

Topic	Key Points
Policy Change	India to resume wheat exports after ~4-year ban (imposed in May 2022).
Authority	Export quotas to be allocated by DGFT (Directorate General of Foreign Trade) .
Reason for Ban (2022)	Food security concerns, lower harvest, rising inflation.
Current Trigger for Resumption	Surplus stock + record production + stable prices.
Interested Countries	Egypt, Indonesia, Myanmar, Bangladesh.
FCI Stock Position	~22 MT stock vs 7.46 MT buffer norm (huge surplus).
Production (FY26)	Expected ~120 MT (record output) .
Previous Production	~117 MT in 2024–25.
Retail Price	~₹30.8/kg (↓ ~3% YoY).
Export Competitiveness	\$275–280/tonne (CFR to Bangladesh).
Govt Export Allowance (2026)	2.5 MT wheat + 0.5 MT processed products allowed earlier.
Weather Impact	Unseasonal rains, hailstorms → 20–30% quality loss + ~2 MT quantity loss.

Export Competitiveness	\$275–280/tonne (CFR to Bangladesh).
Govt Export Allowance (2026)	2.5 MT wheat + 0.5 MT processed products allowed earlier.
Weather Impact	Unseasonal rains, hailstorms → 20–30% quality loss + ~2 MT quantity loss.
Area Under Cultivation	~33.41 million hectares (↑ 3% YoY).
Damage to Crops	~0.24 million hectares affected (rabi crops).
Procurement Target	Govt aims to procure >30 MT wheat (2026–27) .
Market Impact	Stable domestic prices due to high stock levels.

Success of Womaniya Initiative



(As of FY 2025-26)



2.1+ lakh women-led MSEs registered on GeM



13.7 lakh Order Volume secured by women sellers



₹28,000+ crore Contract Value awarded



27.60% growth over FY 2024-25



5.6% Total Order Value awarded, exceeding the 3% mandate

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry



**India–Uzbekistan Joint
Exercise DUSTLIK 2026**

Topic	Key Points
Exercise Name	DUSTLIK 2026
Countries Involved	India 🇮🇳 & Uzbekistan 🇺🇿
Edition	7th Edition
Dates	April 12 – April 25, 2026
Location	Gurumsaray Field Training Area, Namangan (Uzbekistan)
Nature of Exercise	Annual bilateral military exercise
Conduct Pattern	Held alternately in India & Uzbekistan
Previous Edition (2025)	Foreign Training Node, Aundh, Pune (India)
Indian Contingent	Primarily from MAHAR Regiment + Indian Air Force personnel
Uzbekistan Contingent	Personnel from Uzbekistan Army & Air Force
Objective	Enhance joint operational capability & military cooperation
Key Activities	Tactical drills, joint planning, endurance training, land navigation
Operational Focus	Semi-mountainous terrain operations & counter-terrorism
Special Feature	48-hour validation exercise at end
Strategic Significance	Improves interoperability, coordination, and defence ties
Outcome	Sharing best practices, strengthening bilateral defence relations

A large satellite dish antenna is positioned on a dark, flat landscape under a night sky filled with stars. The Milky Way galaxy is visible as a bright, blueish-white band of stars stretching across the upper portion of the sky. The dish is mounted on a complex metal structure with a staircase leading up to it. The overall scene is dark and atmospheric, emphasizing the connection between ground-based observation and space exploration.

NASA PACE Satellite

Topic	Key Points
Satellite Name	PACE (Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, Ocean Ecosystem)
Agency	NASA
Launch	February 2024
Orbit Type	Sun-synchronous orbit (consistent lighting for observation)
Main Objective	Study ocean biology, aerosols, clouds, and climate dynamics
Key Achievement	Can detect nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) pollution at factory-level precision
Significance	Enables tracking of pollution sources (factories, highways)
Primary Instrument	OCI (Ocean Color Instrument) – hyperspectral spectrometer
Spectral Range	Ultraviolet → Shortwave Infrared
Additional Instruments	SPEXone & HARP2 (polarimeters)
Function of Polarimeters	Study light polarization to analyse aerosols, clouds, particles
Data Coverage	Global coverage every 1–2 days
Major Advantage	High-resolution, fine-scale pollution monitoring
Environmental Impact	Helps in air quality monitoring & climate research
Policy Use	Supports targeted environmental regulations & pollution control



India Ranked 3rd in Renewable Energy (RE) Capacity

Topic	Key Points
Context	India ranked 3rd globally in renewable energy installed capacity
Ranking	3rd (after China & USA)
Authority/Data Source	Union Ministry of New & Renewable Energy
Significance	Reflects India's rapid transition to clean & sustainable energy
Total Non-Fossil Capacity	283.5 GW
Components	Solar, Wind, Hydro, Nuclear, other non-fossil sources
Capacity Addition (2025–26)	55.3 GW (highest ever annual addition)
Key Growth Driver	Expansion of renewable infrastructure & policies
Rooftop Solar Contribution	8.7 GW
Decentralisation	Growth in household & commercial rooftop solar systems
Global Comparison	Behind China (1st) and USA (2nd)
Environmental Impact	Supports low-carbon economy & climate goals

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule

Full Name	Jyotirao Govindrao Phule
Born	April 11, 1827
Place of Birth	Bombay Presidency (present-day Maharashtra)
Social Background	Mali caste (gardener community)
Known For	Social reformer, anti-caste activist, educationist
Core Ideology	Equality, social justice, anti-caste system
Influences	Thomas Paine, American anti-slavery movement, Buddha, Kabir
Education Contribution	Opened first school for lower-caste girls (1848, Pune)
Role of Savitribai Phule	First woman teacher of the school
Organization Founded	Satyashodhak Samaj (1873)
Objective of Samaj	Upliftment of Shudras & Dalits; fight Brahmanical dominance
Social Reforms	Supported widow remarriage, opposed child marriage
Welfare Work	Established home for pregnant widows & orphanage
Symbolic Act	Opened his well for all castes (against untouchability)
Famous Work	<i>Gulamgiri</i> (1873)
Theme of Work	Critique of caste system; compared to slavery in USA
Title	Awarded "Mahatma" in 1888
Death	November 28, 1890 (Pune)

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PRATIK GANDHI

PATRALEKHA



DRS. KIRAN AND PALLAVI PATEL
GLOBAL UNIVERSITY (KPGU) VADODRA
PRESENTS



PHULE

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY ANANTH NARAYAN MAHADEVAN

A MOTION PICTURE EVENT IN HINDI

PRODUCED BY

PRANAY CHOKSHI JAGDISH PATEL
ANUYA CHAUHAN KUDECHA RITESH KUDECHA
SUUNIL JAIN

COMING SOON

Q Jeeva

Class24 Award for selected students

**SSC CGL
FINAL
RESULT
2025-26**



Word of the day

Innocuous:

not injurious to physical or mental health

Synonyms: unobjectionable, innocent, harmless

Usage: *An innocuous present would be a gift basket of fruit and snacks.*

Pronunciation: /ɪˈnɒkjʊəs/

International Phonetic Alphabet: newsth.live/innocuous



Thank you 😊