

# Daily Current Affairs





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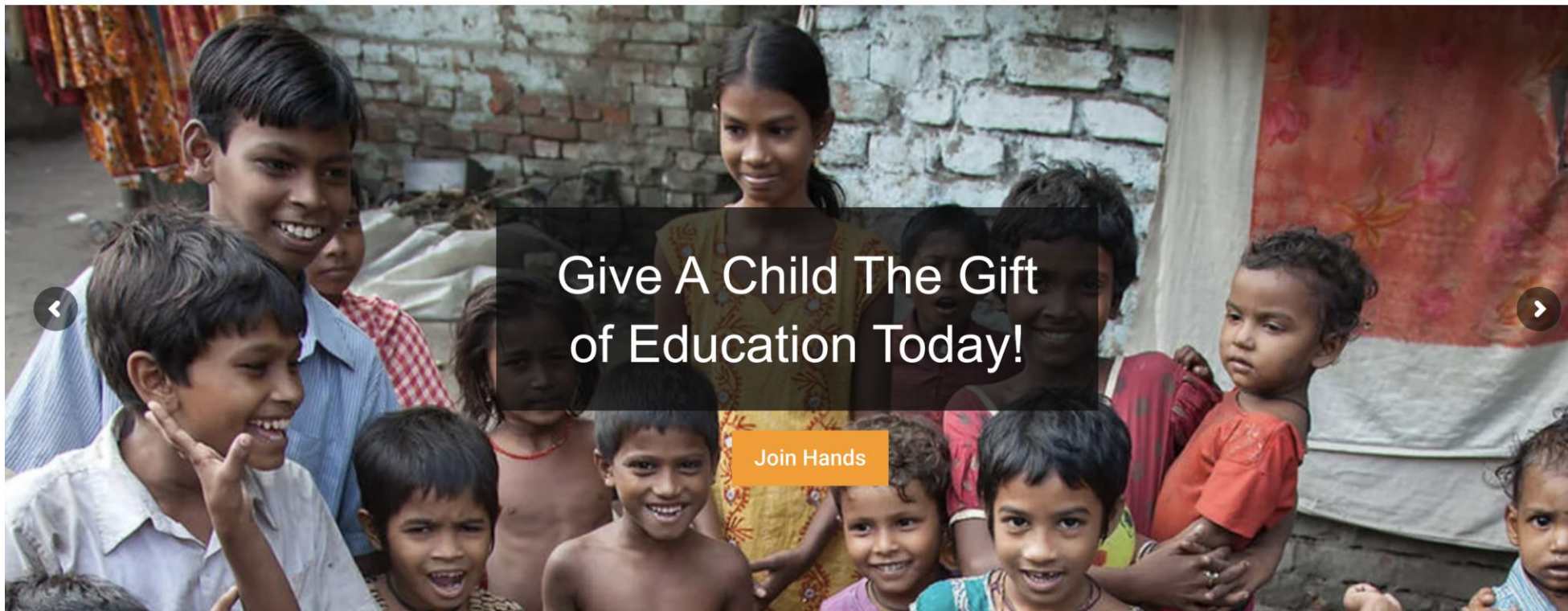


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**THE HUDDLE**

**Regionalism in emerging world order**

Former Sri Lankan President meets the idea of India taking a lead in ensuring the emergence of South Asia as 'most powerful region'

FULL COVERAGE » PAGES 6 & 7

**33 killed in Sudan strikes blamed on paramilitary RSF**

WORLD » PAGE 14

**Pope Leo XIV, the bridge-building American pontiff**

PROFILES » PAGE 11

**IPL likely to restart before next weekend**

SPORT » PAGE 15

INSIDE



**Crucial air bases in Pakistan struck, says govt.**

**NEW DELHI** Wing Commander Vyoma Singh, in a briefing said that Pakistan air bases such as Skardu, Sargodha, Jacobabad and Bhakkar suffered extensive damage in the Indian strikes. With these, some 10 air bases of Pakistan are hit. » PAGE 4



**Five key figures of I.T. JEM killed: security agencies**

**NEW DELHI** At least five top figures of the Pakistan-based banned outfits, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), were killed during the precision strikes carried out on May 7, security agencies said on Saturday. » PAGE 5



**House panel on OBC to discuss caste census soon**

**NEW DELHI** With the Centre greenlighting caste enumeration in the next census, the parliament's committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes is likely to add this to the agenda of its future meetings. The Hindu has learned. » PAGE 3

**Peace deal struck, but Pak. violations persist**

India, Pakistan reach 'understanding' about stopping 'military action, firing', says Foreign Minister Jaishankar

Pakistan made Outreach for pause in firing on Saturday afternoon: Misri

Pakistan 'breaches' understanding hours later, Misri calls for seriousness from the neighbour

Kallol Bhattacharjee

After three days of intense military hostilities, India and Pakistan have reached an "understanding" about stopping "military action" and "firing". External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announced on Saturday. Official sources said the decision to stop military actions was bilaterally agreed between India and Pakistan and that the initiation of this "understanding" would not affect the recent punitive decisions that India has taken targeting Pakistan after the deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22. However, cross-border firing was reported in the evening at some locations along the International Border in Jammu, while explosions were heard in Srinagar.

**Explosions heard: Omar** "What the hell just happened to the ceasefire? Explosions heard across Srinagar," Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said in a post on X at 8.53 p.m. "This is no ceasefire. The air defence units in the middle of Srinagar just opened up," the Chief Minister added in another post.

In a late night press meeting, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said Pakistan committed "repeated violations" of the "understanding" on Saturday, adding that the Indian armed forces were given instructions to "deal strongly" with the situation.

"We call upon Pakistan to take appropriate steps to address these violations and deal with the situation with the same seriousness and responsibility," said Mr. Misri, who described these violations as a "breach" of the "understanding".

Earlier, Mr. Jaishankar

**Border flare-up**

A timeline of rising tensions between India and Pakistan

April 22: Deadly terror attack in Pahalgam leaves 26 people dead.

April 23-24: India takes diplomatic measures against Pakistan.

Pakistan, including placing the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance and revocation of visas to Pakistani citizens.

May 3: India announces freezing of goods originating in or imported by Pakistan.

May 4: India suspends all postal links with Pakistan, and closes ports to Pakistani ships.

May 7: Operation Sindoor targets 9

terrorist facilities in Pakistan

May 7-8: Intense hostilities along the LOC and International Border with military incidents in Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Gujarat.

May 8: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announces 'understanding' to stop firing and military activities.

Firing targets: A house damaged by Pakistani artillery shelling in Jammu early on Saturday, Apr.

India has consistently maintained a firm and uncompromising stance against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It will continue to do so. — S. JAISHANKAR, External Affairs Minister

High alert: CRPF personnel patrol Lal Chowk in Srinagar with a sniffer dog on Saturday. BHANU NISAR

The Director-General of Military Operations of Pakistan called the Director-General of Military Operations of India at 1535 hours. It was agreed that both sides would stop all firing and military actions and sea with effect from 1700 hours (5 PM) today.

VIKRAM MISRI, Foreign Secretary

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Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked Mr. Trump and the U.S. for "facilitating the outcome", which, he said, Pakistan had "accepted in the interest of regional peace and stability".

Mr. Trump posted a statement on his Truth Social account about half an hour before Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri made the announcement of the "understanding". » PAGE 4

**Borders to be under tight watch: officials**

**NEW DELHI** Amid reports of Pakistani troops moving closer to the western border, BSF fortified its presence and the Army put its armoured units in the forward areas of Rajasthan on high alert, a senior government official told The Hindu. Another BSF official said that the formations had not received any instruction to scale down the deployment after the cessation of military operations was announced around 6 p.m. on Saturday and the border guarding force will be on high alert particularly in Punjab and Jammu. Earlier, Mr. Cdr. Vyoma Singh said Pakistan military has been ordered to move their troops into forward areas adding that Indian armed forces remain in a high state of operational readiness. » PAGE 4

**Monsoon likely to reach Kerala on May 27, earliest onset since 2009: IMD**

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

The southwest monsoon is likely to reach Kerala on May 27, earlier than the usual date of June 1, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Sunday.

If the monsoon arrives in Kerala as expected, it will be the earliest since 2009, when it began on May 23, according to IMD data.

The arrival of the main rain-bearing system over the Indian mainland is officially declared when it reaches Kerala, usually around June 1.

The monsoon typically covers the entire country by July 8. It starts withdrawing from northwest India around September 17 and ends by October 15.

The monsoon had set in over the northern State on May 30 last year; June 8 in 2023; May 29 in 2022; June 3 in 2021; June 1 in 2020; June 8 in 2019; and May 29 in 2018.

An IMD official said there is no direct relationship between the onset date and the total rainfall

water following heavy rain on Friday, Kerala, submerged under

Pre-season precipitation: A street near East Fort in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, submerged under

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Pakistan 'breaches' understanding hours later, Misri calls for seriousness from the neighbour

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

After three days of intense military hostilities, India and Pakistan have reached an "understanding" about stopping "military action" and "firing", External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announced on Saturday.

Official sources said the decision to stop military actions was bilaterally agreed between India and Pakistan and that the initiation of this "understanding" would not affect the recent punitive decisions that India has taken targeting Pakistan after the deadly terrorist attack in Pahal-gam on April 22.

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"This is no ceasefire. The air defence units in the middle of Srinagar just opened up," the Chief Minister added in another post.

In a late night press meeting, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said Pakistan committed "repeated violations" of the "understanding" on Saturday, adding that the Indian armed forces were given instructions to "deal strongly" with the situation.

"We call upon Pakistan to take appropriate steps to address these violations and deal with the situation with seriousness and responsibility," said Mr. Misri, who described these violations as a "breach" of the "understanding".

Earlier, Mr. Jaishankar



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IMRAN NISSAR

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**VIKRAM MISRI**  
Foreign Secretary



## Border flare-up

A timeline of rising tensions between India and Pakistan

**April 22:** Deadly terror attack in Pahalgam leaves 26 people dead

**April 23-24:** India takes diplomatic measures against

Pakistan, including placing the Indus Waters Treaty 'in abeyance' and revocation of visas to Pakistan citizens

**May 3:** India announces freeze on imports of goods 'originating in or exported by Pakistan', suspends all postal links with Pakistan, and closes ports to Pakistani ships

**May 7:** Operation Sindoor targets 9

terror-linked facilities in Pakistan

**May 7-10:** Intense hostilities along the LoC and International Border with military incidents in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat

**May 10:** External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar announces 'understanding' to stop firing and military activities



**Firing target:** A house damaged by Pakistani artillery shelling in Jammu early on Saturday. AFP

India has consistently maintained a firm and uncompromising stance against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It will continue to do so — **S. JAISHANKAR**, External Affairs Minister

said, "India and Pakistan have today worked out an understanding on stopping firing and military action. India has consistently maintained a firm and uncompromising stance against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It will continue to do so." The declaration was followed by an official briefing by Mr. Misri, who said the outreach for pausing the firing was made by the Pakistani side on Saturday afternoon.

"The Director-General of Military Operations of Pakistan called the Director-General of Military Operations of India at 1535 hours [3.35 p.m. IST]. It was agreed between them

that both sides would stop all firing and military action on land and in the air and sea with effect from 1700 hours [5 p.m.] today. Instructions have been given on both sides to give effect to the understanding," Mr. Misri said. "The Directors-General of Military Operations will talk again on the 12th of May at 1200 hours," he said, indicating that the two sides will review the pause during the meeting on Monday.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, officials indicated that the announcement is at a trial stage as it comes against the backdrop of an intense phase of hostilities and it remains to be seen if it holds on the ground.

A senior official of the External Affairs Ministry clarified that "there is no pre-condition" or "post condition" to the stopping of firing and military action.

### No change in measures

"This understanding is not going to affect any of the decisions that we have taken against Pakistan in the past few weeks after the Pahalgam terror attack, and most importantly, our stance on terrorism remains uncompromised by Saturday's bilateral understanding," said the official, reiterating that India has decided that any future act of terror will be considered an act of war against the

country and will be responded to accordingly.

"The message is clear this time that a terror attack like Pahalgam will not go unpunished in future," the official said.

India placed the Indus Waters Treaty "in abeyance" on April 24 after the Pahalgam attack. That apart, India revoked 14 types of visas that were issued to Pakistani citizens of different categories, sparing only the diplomatic and long-term visas (LTVs). Extending these measures, India has also frozen imports from Pakistan and nixed postal links.

"These slew of measures, including the suspension of the Kartarpur

Corridor remain in place," the official said.

Earlier, Mr. Misri had accused Pakistan of spreading a disinformation campaign and trying to foment communal discord in India by targeting Sikh holy places in Pakistan as well as in Punjab and Jammu.

Since the beginning of Operation Sindoor on May 7, several international stakeholders have reached out to India and Pakistan calling for de-escalation, but India has officially maintained that the two sides had not severed diplomatic contacts as both countries continued to host each other's diplomatic missions despite escalating military clashes.

## Struck the deal without any mediation: govt.

NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday that the Directors-General of Military Operations of India and Pakistan "directly" had reached an understanding to end hostilities. However, the first intimation of the cessation of hostilities came from neither New Delhi nor Islamabad but from Washington, where U.S. President Donald Trump claimed credit for the U.S. mediation of the conflict. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked Mr. Trump and the U.S. for "facilitating the outcome", which, he said, Pakistan had "accepted in the interest of regional peace and stability". Mr. Trump posted a statement on his Truth Social account about half an hour before Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri made the announcement of the "understanding". » **PAGE 4**

## Borders to be under tight watch: officials

NEW DELHI

Amid reports of Pakistani troops moving closer to the western border, BSF fortified its presence and the Army put its armoured units in the forward areas of Rajasthan on high alert, a senior government official told *The Hindu*. Another BSF official said that the formations had not received any instruction to scale down the deployment after the cessation of military operations was announced around 6 p.m. on Saturday and the border guarding force will be on high alert particularly in Punjab and Jammu. Earlier, Wg. Cdr. Vyomika Singh said Pakistan military has been observed to be moving their troops into forward areas adding that "Indian armed forces remain in a high state of operational readiness". » **PAGE 4**

## UNDERSTANDING... NOT YET?

**9.00am** | Pak DGMO calls his Indian counterpart

**9.45am** | India launches fresh attack on Pak airbases

**10.50am** | MEA & defence min briefing begins. No indication that pause in hostilities being considered

**3.35pm** | Pak DGMO calls Indian counterpart again. Both agree to stop all firing and military action

**3.50pm** | Indian govt sources say any future act of terror will be considered an act of war

**5.30pm** | Following Trump's post, both sides confirm pause in fighting effective from 5pm Saturday. Next round of talks on May 12 at 12pm

**6.10pm** | EAM S Jaishankar tweets about pause

**8pm** | Indian forces open fire after Pak violates the pause pact in various sectors. Blasts heard in Jammu



## Is safe harbour important for social media?

What is intermediary liability? How does safe harbour protect social media platforms from legal action?

Aroon Desai

The story so far:

In written submissions to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting said that it is reconsidering the concept of safe harbour for social media platforms, to combat the issue of "fake news" online.

What is safe harbour?

Safe harbour is a legal concept that protects individual websites that allow third party users to share content from legal liability for any unlawful posts. The concept was put in place in the early years of the internet as a key safeguard to encourage innovation online and prevent website owners from being unfairly hounded for content they had no hand in publishing. The concept of a middleman being responsible for third party content is known as intermediary liability, and safe harbour has been the default, from any criminal action for content hosted by them. In the U.S., safe harbour is enshrined in Section 230 of the Communications Act of 1934, inserted into the decades-old law in 1996. In India, Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000, grants intermediaries similar protections.

The protections are not without conditions. In India, if an intermediary receives "actual knowledge" of illegal content on their website, they lose liability protections under Section 79 if they don't work to take the content down within a certain time period.

The Supreme Court has read down "actual knowledge" to mean a court order or government notification. Without safe harbour protections, online intermediaries could face consequences for illegal content. For instance, in 2004, the then head of the website eBay in India was arrested because of a user listing of a disk containing child sex abuse material for sale.

How are intermediary liability protections regulated in India?

While safe harbour does have the conditions described above, the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 has put in place additional conditions for platforms to retain protection from intermediary liability. Social media firms need to have a nodal officer, a grievance officer resident in India, and need to periodically submit reports of complaints they receive on content, and action taken against them for this. Different parts of the IT Rules have been challenged in courts in the last few years. For example, in 2023, the Union government notified the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules 2023, which contained provisions that would strip safe harbour from sites for content that has been notified as "fake news" by the Press Information Bureau's fact check unit. That amendment was immediately challenged in the Bombay High Court, among others by the comedian Kunal Kamra. Petitioners accused the government of exceeding its authority by depriving a fact check unit that could be an arbiter of truth, and putting pressure on social media companies to take content down without following the longer process of sending a notice to users whose content is being removed. The Bombay High Court sided with Mr. Kamra, and the case is being appealed by the government.

Why is the government considering amending the safe harbour provisions?

The government has accused foreign social media platforms of flouting Indian laws and acting too slowly on takedown notices. On multiple occasions before Elon Musk acquired Twitter, now known as X, the platform had public confrontations with the Union government regarding orders to hide users' content. X under Mr. Musk has continued to fight the government's right to issue blocking orders taken down without following the longer process of sending a notice to users whose content is being removed. The Bombay High Court sided with Mr. Kamra, and the case is being appealed by the government.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has indicated that it would draft a Digital India Act (DIA) that would incorporate these changes, but the outlines of how safe harbour would change under this proposed law have not yet been revealed. Moreover, no DIA draft law has been released yet.

## What will be impact of India-U.K. trade deal?

How long was the free trade agreement in the works? When is it expected to be signed and implemented? Which are the sectors likely to benefit apart from textile and automobiles? What are the challenges for agriculture and medium and small enterprises?

Saikatarn Ghosh

The story so far:

After nearly three-and-a-half years, India and the U.K. finally gave their nod to a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) this week. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said the pact would set a new benchmark for "equitable and ambitious trade between the two large economies". Though the fingerprint has not yet been made public, domestic industry has welcomed the announcement, amid concerns about the potential impact on agriculture, medium and small enterprises (MSMEs). The deal is likely to be signed after three months, and will take over a year to implement.

Why is the deal significant for both nations?

The U.K. is India's 16th largest trading partner and India is the U.K.'s 11th largest partner. Their bilateral trade is about \$60 billion with India enjoying a positive trade balance, which is expected to double by 2030, according to the Indian government's estimates. The new trade deal, as assessed by the British government, would increase the bilateral trade by another \$34 billion. The agreement comes in the backdrop of global trade tensions and uncertainty triggered by U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff regime.

What are the expectations from the FTA?

While the details are yet to be published, the



Trade talks: Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 summit in Brazil in November 2024. REUTERS

Indian workers temporarily in the U.K. will now have to pay social security contributions for three years

British government said it would benefit from an agreement to slash tariffs on 90% of the product categories for export, with 85% of them becoming "tariff-free" within a decade. Further, while its assessment on 2022 report, it estimated that \$534 million worth in tariffs would be saved when the deal is enforced. On the other hand, New Delhi expects to benefit from tariffs being eliminated on 99% of its export product categories. It expects an increase in export opportunities for sectors such as textiles, leather, footwear, auto parts, engineering as well as gems and jewellery, among others. The British government mentioned about curtailed tariffs on automobiles, whisky and gin, sectors which had been hit by Mr. Trump's tariffs. Alcoholic beverages from the U.K. will now have a 75% tariff rate, from the present 150%. This would be further reduced to 40% within a decade. Tariffs on automobile exports too stand reduced from over 100% to 10% albeit with a certain quota based on price for conventional combustion engine vehicles and capacity for electric vehicles.

With respect to services, India has secured an exemption for Indian workers temporarily in the U.K. and for their employers from paying social security contributions for three years under the Double Contribution Convention. Immigration was among the major points of contention during negotiations with the erstwhile conservative government. The FTA will also seek that visa processes remain "transparent" and no "unnecessary" obstacles are created in professional travel.

How has domestic industry responded?

Indian industry is upbeat about the announcement and expects a spike in exports. Textiles are among the major points of export to the U.K. Mihaleshwar Thakur, secretary-general of the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEP), told *The Hindu* that exports are expected to "grow exponentially". He said India would now enjoy duty-free access to U.K. markets like their main competitors Bangladesh and Vietnam. On competition, he clarified that it was "hardly any" import from the U.K. in this sector.

The Indian automobile industry feels it will benefit from the deal. C.S. Vigneshwar, president, Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), contended that the FTA would ensure the U.K. has better access to India's premium (vehicle) segment market, and Indian makers would serve the U.K.'s mass segment markets. "We do not expect the U.K.'s mid-segment cars to be competitive to Indian

vehicles because the cost of production and labour is lower in India," he stated.

Keir Rhamall, chairman, Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), in a social media post projected a rise of \$2.5 billion of exports within the next two years in the sector, thus, culminating in bilateral trade doubling to \$7 billion.

Are there concerns?

There are concerns in primarily two sectors, agriculture and MSMEs. Vijay Krishnan, general secretary of the All-India Kisan Sabha, points to a previous FTA with Sri Lanka having led to a price crash in similar products produced by Indian farmers like spices and tea, among others. He also cites the case of the lasting impact of the ASEAN FTAs impact on rubber which stood at ₹210/kg in 2011 compared to ₹170/kg in 2025. He observes that FTAs have paved "unequal" paradigms for Indian farmers and MSMEs. "The Indian farmers hold small lands, a good number of them being less than five acres. This is not the case with advanced countries," he stated. Mr. Krishnan further points to the World Trade Organization's contention about minimum selling price in India. "Given the number of farmers we have, the cumulative amount of subsidies is huge though per-capita pales in comparison to European farmers. Also, WTO considers the base price from the late 1980s," he states, elaborating, "there has been much escalation of costs since then and farmers must be given commensurate increase in prices, incentives and subsidies". Ajay Srivastava, founder of the India-based Global Trade Research Initiative, said permitting foreign firms to compete on an equal footing in India could weaken the policy tools India needs to build local capacity in vital sectors such as defence, renewables, health systems and infrastructure. "It also threatens the ecosystem of MSMEs that rely on protected access to government contracts to stay viable," he observes.

On public procurement, the U.K. held that the FTA would allow their companies to bid for government procurement contracts on "better terms and with greater access to the relevant information to support their bids". According to Dinesh Abrol, adjunct faculty at the Transdisciplinary Research Cluster on Sustainable Studies at JNU in Delhi, this could lead to a growing import dependency.

The other unaddressed aspect in the FTA concerns the U.K.'s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) which would impose a "carbon price" on goods bearing greenhouses being imported into the country. This would be of particular consequence to Indian aluminium and steel exports. Although unrelated to the U.K., Mr. Goyal warned that India too would retaliate with likewise taxes should Europe go ahead with the carbon pricing mechanism, suggesting a cause for potential uncertainty.

## What's the self-defence clause in global law?

Under international law, how will India's military response against terror camps in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir be perceived? Which country has been a vocal proponent of the 'unwilling or unable' doctrine? What happens if there is a breach of the ceasefire agreement?

Aaratrika Bhaumik

The story so far:

On May 10, India and Pakistan agreed to halt "all firing and military action" following days of escalating tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. The announcement came after the Indian armed forces conducted 24 precision strikes on May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir. In response to the Pahalgam massacre that left 26 dead. While India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra described the strikes as "measured and non-escalatory", Pakistan denounced them as a "blatant act of war" and alleged civilian casualties.

What does the right to self-defence entail?

Article 51 of the United Nations (UN) Charter carves out an exception to the prohibition on the use of that an armed attack on a state, which bars member states from threatening or using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. It allows the use of force solely in the exercise of self-defence following an armed attack. The Foreign Secretary's statement did not explicitly invoke Article 51, his description of the missile strikes as a "response" to the Pahalgam terror attack appears to be reliant on this principle.



Call to peace: Celebrations after ceasefire announcement between India and Pakistan in Srinagar on Saturday. IRFAN NISAR

If the ceasefire agreement is to hold, the UN Charter could also apply. The UN Charter could also apply. The UN Charter could also apply.

However, this right is not unfettered. Article 51 imposes a procedural obligation on member states to "immediately" report to the UN Security Council (UNSC) any military measures taken in self-defence. The UNSC then assumes the authority to undertake action to "maintain or restore international peace and security".

Can it be exercised against non-state actors? The UN Charter governs only the conduct of states and, by extension, state-sponsored uses of force. Following the 9/11 attacks, the growing role of non-state actors (NSAs) in armed conflict prompted some, notably the U.S., to argue that the right of self-defence under Article 51 extends to military action against NSAs like al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS). However, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has adopted a more restrictive position. In cases such as *Nicaragua versus U.S.* (1986) and *the Democratic Republic of the Congo versus Uganda* (2005), it has held that an armed attack on a state, which Article 51 includes acts by NSAs only if they are carried out "by or on behalf of" the state. Accordingly, attribution to a state remains a necessary condition for invoking the right of self-defence under international law. It is evident from the Foreign Secretary's statement that India has not contextualised the missile strikes within the international law framework. However, by asserting that 'Pakistan-trained terrorists' were responsible for the Pahalgam attack and describing it as part of 'Pakistan's long-standing record of cross-border terrorism', India seems to have directly attributed the attack to Pakistan. Prabhakar Ranjan, professor at Jindal Global Law School, told *The Hindu*.

What is the 'unwilling or unable' doctrine?

An emerging doctrine in international law permits the use of force in self-defence against NSAs operating from the territory of another state, when that state is "unwilling or unable" to neutralise the threat. The U.S. has been a leading proponent of this doctrine, invoking it to justify the 2011 military operation that killed al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Pakistan and the 2014 airstrikes against the IS in Syria. However, states such as China, Mexico, and

Russia have condemned such military operations for undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the host state.

Dr. Ranjan noted that the Foreign Secretary's remarks that Pakistan had taken "no demonstrable step" to act against terrorist infrastructure in the fortnight following the Pahalgam attack and that the country has long served as a "haven for terrorists" indicate a reliance on the "unwilling or unable" doctrine. "This doctrine does not require state attribution to attacks by NSAs, thereby lowering the threshold for international peace and security," he explained. "However, this principle is contested and lacks the consistent state practice and *opinio juris* necessary to crystallise into a rule of customary international law."

Is proportionality essential?

Military operations under Article 51 must comply with the principles of necessity and proportionality. It is generally accepted that a host state's unwillingness or inability to neutralise NSAs may fulfil the necessity requirement. However, the *Guidelines on Counter-Terrorism and International Law* (2010) emphasise that military operations against the host state's armed forces or facilities are permissible only in "exceptional circumstances", such as when the state actively supports the terrorists. On proportionality, there are two competing views: a narrow self-defence under international law is necessary to stop an ongoing attack, while a broader view permits actions to repel and prevent future attacks reasonably anticipated under the circumstances. "Since the military strikes on terrorists" were directed solely at terrorist infrastructure, without targeting Pakistani military assets or civilian settlements, they would satisfy the requirements of necessity and proportionality", Dr. Ranjan said.

What lies ahead?

If the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan fails to hold, the UNSC could adopt a resolution calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities. It may also vote on a subsequent resolution to address any further violations, including the imposition of sanctions or the deployment of its own peacekeeping or military forces. However, the successful passage of such resolutions is likely to be shaped by the geopolitical interests of the Council's permanent members, each of whom holds veto power.



# What's the self-defence clause in global law?

Under international law, how will India's military response against terror camps in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir be perceived? Which country has been a vocal proponent of the 'unwilling or unable' doctrine? What happens if there is a breach of the ceasefire agreement?

**Aaratrika Bhaumik**

## The story so far:

**I**n May 10, India and Pakistan agreed to halt "all firing and military action" following days of escalating tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. The announcement came after the Indian armed forces conducted 24 precision strikes on May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, in response to the Pahalgam massacre that left 26 dead. While India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri described the strikes as "measured and non-escalatory," Pakistan denounced them as a "blatant act of war" and alleged civilian casualties.

## What does the right to self-defence entail?

Article 51 of the United Nations (UN) Charter carves out an exception to the prohibition on the use of force outlined in Article 2(4), which bars member states from threatening or using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. It allows the use of force solely in the exercise of self-defence following an armed attack. Although the Foreign Secretary's statement did not explicitly invoke Article 51, his description of the missile strikes as a "response" to the Pahalgam terror attack appears to be reliant on this principle.

If the ceasefire agreement fails to hold, the UNSC could adopt a resolution calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities

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**Call to peace:** Celebrations after ceasefire announcement between India and Pakistan in Srinagar on Saturday. IMRAN NISSAR

# International Law on Self-Defence:

## 1. Article 51 of the UN Charter:

- Allows a country to exercise **self-defence** in case of an **armed attack**.
- Recognizes the right of **individual or collective self-defence** until the **UN Security Council** takes measures to maintain peace.

## 2. Can it be exercised against non-state actors?

- The **UN Charter** primarily addresses actions by **states**.
- However, in the context of **9/11** and subsequent international practices, actions against **non-state actors (NSAs)** like **Al-Qaeda** and **ISIS** are deemed permissible.
- The **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** in **Nicaragua vs. U.S. (1986)** and **DRC vs. Uganda (2005)** cases established that an **armed attack by NSAs** could justify self-defence if they operate under a **state's control**.

## India's Legal Justification:

- India's Stand:
  - Claims that attacks from **Pakistan-based terror groups** necessitate **pre-emptive self-defence**.
  - The **Pahalgam attack** by the **TRF (The Resistance Front)**, allegedly supported by **Pakistan**, is viewed as a **blatant act of war**.

### 3. Unwilling or Unable Doctrine:

- An emerging principle that allows for **self-defence against NSAs** when the host state is **unwilling or unable** to control them.
- The doctrine applies when the state either **supports or fails to prevent terrorist activities**.
- Pakistan's **lack of action against terror groups** like **Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)** and **Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)** is cited to justify India's military response.



## Principle of Proportionality:

- Self-defence actions must be:
    - **Necessary:** Responding to a credible and immediate threat.
    - **Proportional:** Limited to neutralizing the threat without excessive force.
- 

## What Lies Ahead:

- If the **ceasefire agreement** between India and Pakistan fails:
  - The **UNSC** can pass a resolution calling for the **immediate cessation of hostilities**.
  - The situation might escalate, leading to **international mediation** or a **UN-backed peace initiative**.

# EOS-09 sat set to be launched on May 18, will boost India's border surveillance powers

Surendra.Singh@timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** India's surveillance power from the sky is set to get a big boost as Isro is scheduled to launch the PSLV-C61 mission carrying the EOS-09 (RISAT-1B) radar imaging satellite into a sun-synchronous orbit on May 18. The launch is scheduled at 6.59 am IST from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.

The surveillance satellite will strengthen India's Earth observation capabilities as EOS-09 is equipped with a state-of-the-art C-band synthetic aperture radar, enabling it to capture high-resolution images of Earth's surface, regardless of weather conditions. The satellite will play a key role in boosting India's surveillance along its sensitive borders with arch-rivals Pakistan and China, and guarding vast coastlines.

Unlike optical satellites that struggle with clouds or darkness, RISAT-1B's C-



Isro is scheduled to launch the EOS-09 (RISAT-1B) satellite on May 18

band synthetic aperture radar can overcome these barriers. This capability is significant in detecting infiltration, tracking suspicious enemy movements and backing anti-terrorist operations. With tensions along the border running high, the satellite's ability to provide continuous and reliable intelligence is a strategic asset to Indian security forces.

RISAT-1B features five distinct imaging modes, offering the flexibility to switch between ultra-high-resolution imaging of up to one metre for detecting small objects and broader scans for large-area observation.

EOS-09 (RISAT-1B) is a follow-on to the RISAT-1 satellite with similar configuration. It complements and supplements data from the Resourcesat, Cartosat and RISAT-2B Series satellites. RISAT-1B's C-band SAR will also be useful for civil applications like agriculture, forestry, soil moisture, geology, sea ice, coastal monitoring, object identification and flood monitoring.

The RISAT series satellites, particularly RISAT-2, were earlier instrumental in providing imagery for the 2016 surgical strike on terror launchpads in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and also played a significant role in the 2019 Balakot air strike.









**SHRITI SPARKLES**  
**Indian women win tri-nation ODI series**  
**SPORT » PAGE 16**

**Link involved** Meanwhile, the police urged people to avoid returning to the frontline village. "We are not allowed to return. We are told the village will be cleared first," said a displaced person from Sillikote at the Government Women's College, Barammulla, which is a safe zone for the displaced population from Uri.

The police said there was risk of "unexploded military ordnance and shelling." "Dangers of ordnance remain hidden in af-



# Heavy losses inflicted on Pak. military: DGMO

35-40 Pakistani military personnel killed in combat, key installations damaged during Operation Sindoor

The officer warns Pakistan against 'misadventure', pays tribute to five Indian military casualties

Officials say that Operation Sindoor is 'still ongoing' as the operational alert continues

**Dinakar Peri**  
NEW DELHI

India has achieved the desired objectives of Operation Sindoor, which is "still ongoing", and Pakistan will have to pay a very heavy price if it resorts to any misadventure, Director-General of Military Operations (DGMO) Lt.-General Rajiv Ghai said at a tri-service briefing on Sunday.

The DGMO said that at least 35 to 40 Pakistani military personnel were killed in combat on the Line of Control (LoC) during the four-day confrontation and heavy losses were inflicted on Pakistan military, including downing its fighter jets and damaging key military installations.

The DGMO also paid tribute to five Indian military personnel, calling them fallen heroes, and many civilians who "tragically lost their lives" during

Operation Sindoor.

The warning by the armed forces came as an "understanding" between the two countries to stop firing and other military activities, in force since 5 p.m. on Saturday, held precariously amid ceasefire violations and drone intrusions. "We have thus far exercised immense restraint and our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory. Any threat to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and safety of our citizens will be met with decisive force," Lt.-General Ghai said.

## Grants full authority

Army chief General Upen- dra Dwivedi reviewed the situation with Army Commanders of the western borders on Sunday.

The DGMO said the Army chief had "granted full authority to the Commanders for counter-action in the kinetic domain in case



**Status report:** DGMO Lieutenant-General Rajiv Ghai at a tri-service briefing on Operation Sindoor in New Delhi on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

of any violation by Pakistan".

Recounting the sequence of events leading to the "understanding" between the two militaries, Lt.-General Ghai said a message was received from Pakistan's DGMO on the

hotline on May 10 seeking clarity on his willingness to communicate. "Since our initial aim was to strike terror camps and all our actions in the subsequent days were in response to the intrusions and violations by the Pakistan Air

Force and Pakistan Army, it was decided that I would indeed speak with the Pakistani DGMO," he said.

The DGMOs spoke at 3.35 p.m. on Saturday and it resulted in cessation of cross-border firing and air intrusions by either side

## Target met, losses part of war, pilots back home: IAF

NEW DELHI

"We are in a combat scenario and losses are part of combat," Indian Air Force's Air Marshal A.K. Bharti said on Sunday, adding that the objectives of Operation Sindoor were achieved and all the pilots are back home. He declined to comment at this stage on any aircraft losses on the Indian side. Further, without giving a number, he said that they have shot down some Pakistani aircraft. » **PAGE 5**

from 5 p.m. "We also decided to speak further on May 12 [Monday] at 12 p.m. to discuss the modalities that would enable the longevity of this understanding," he stated.

He noted that it took only a couple of hours for the

Pakistan Army to violate these arrangements. "These violations were responded to robustly and dealt with as they must be," the officer said, adding that a hotline message was sent highlighting their violation and India's "firm and clear intent to respond to these fiercely and punitively, if repeated tonight or later."

The senior officers of the three services observed that it was the massive retaliatory attack by India, which targeted several Pakistani air bases on Saturday morning that prompted Pakistan to reach out for the understanding.

Military and government officials stated that Operation Sindoor is "still ongoing" as the operational alert continues.

(With PTI inputs)

**EDITORIAL**  
» **PAGE 8**



## **1. Key Points:**

- **Operation Sindoor Achievements:**

- India has achieved the primary objectives of Operation Sindoor.
- Operation is still ongoing as of the latest reports.
- Pakistan warned of severe consequences if it resorts to further misadventures.

- **Casualties and Damage:**

- Approximately 35-40 Pakistani military personnel killed during combat.
- Significant damage inflicted on key Pakistani military installations.
- Indian military sustained five casualties, including fallen heroes.

## 2. Statements from Indian Officials:

- **DGMO Lt. General Rajiv Ghai:**
  - Warned Pakistan of a heavy price if it continues hostile activities.
  - Asserted that the Indian military actions are focused, measured, and non-escalatory.
  - Stated that the Indian response was precise and in line with defensive operations.
- **Air Marshal A.K. Bharti (IAF):**
  - Acknowledged that losses are a part of combat scenarios.
  - Confirmed that all Indian pilots involved in the operations have safely returned.

## 3. Military Operations and Alerts:

- **Operational Details:**
  - Operation Sindoor primarily targeted terror camps along the Line of Control (LoC).
  - Included the destruction of Pakistani fighter jets and military infrastructure.
  - Multi-service coordination was emphasized, involving the Indian Army, Air Force, and Navy.
- **IAF Standpoint:**
  - The IAF clarified that no aircraft losses were reported on the Indian side.
  - Emphasized that the objective of the operation was achieved.

#### **4. Strategic Communication and Warnings:**

- **India's Official Communication:**
  - A hotline message was sent to Pakistan's DGMO highlighting the gravity of their violations.
  - Emphasized India's commitment to respond firmly to any further aggression.
- **Firm Warnings:**
  - The Indian military maintains a state of heightened alert along the border.
  - Military and government officials stressed that Operation Sindoor will continue as long as necessary.

#### **5. Additional Information:**

- **Grant of Full Authority:**
  - The Army Chief granted full authority to the Western Commanders for counteraction in case of further provocations.
- **Operational Clarity:**
  - Indian military actions were in response to Pakistan's drone and missile intrusions.
  - The Indian government reiterated its stance of non-escalation while safeguarding national security.



## IN BRIEF



## Senior Puri Jagannath temple priest suspended for a month

**Rankrishna Das Mohapatra**, a senior *Sewayit* (priest) of the Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri, was on Sunday suspended for 30 days over his alleged controversial remarks on his involvement in the consecration of the Jagannath Temple in Digba, West Bengal. The Odisha government had earlier ordered a probe into allegations that surplus timber procured for the Nubakalebra rituals at the Puri temple was used to carve the idols at the Digba temple. Although the government denied the use of any leftover Daru (sacred wood) from Nubakalebra in the Digba temple, Mr. Mohapatra's statement was seen as damaging to the tradition of the Puri temple.

## Woman mauled to death by tiger in Maharashtra

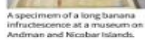
A 65-year-old woman was mauled to death by a tiger in Maharashtra's Chudrapur district on Sunday, a forest official said. The incident comes a day after three women were killed in a similar attack in the district. The victim, Vinaya Shinde, a resident of Nagala village, ventured into the forest area to gather *terai* leaves in the morning when a big cat attacked her, the official said. In an attack on Saturday, a big cat killed three women at the same time in the Sindewahi Range Forest. Meanwhile, a 65-year-old woman was killed by a tiger in the forest of Seoni district in Madhya Pradesh on Saturday, an official said.

## World's longest banana infructescence found in the forests of Andamans

**Shiv Sahay Singh**  
KOLKATA

An infructescence of about 4.2 metres has been recorded in a specimen of wild banana from Andaman and Nicobar Islands, making it the longest infructescence recorded in bananas across the world. The details of the discovery were published in an international peer-reviewed science journal *Botany Letters* earlier this year.

The infructescence was recorded in an endemic species of wild banana, *Musa indandamanensis*, that was first recorded from a remote tropical forest near the Krishna Nala reserve forest on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in 2002 and found mention in a science journal in 2004. Initially when the species of *Musa indandamanensis* was discovered on the Little Andaman Islands by Lalji Singh, head of the regional centre of Botani-



A specimen of a long banana infructescence from Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

cal Survey of India in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the infructescence of the specimen were about 3 metres long. Usually, the infructescence of fruit bunch (in axis) of cultivated species of bananas is about 1 metre long, the scientist said. A few months ago, Dr. Singh and his team came across the species of wild banana in Campbell Bay in the Nicobar group of islands, and the infructescence recorded was longer than all other specimens recorded in the past. "The *Musa indandamanensis* Lalji Singh holds the record for having the long infructescence of banana in Andaman and Nicobar Islands in particular which is an endemic variety found in ANI (Andaman and Nicobar Islands)," reads the paper published by *Botany Letters* earlier this year.

"Though the length of the infructescence recorded recently are the same, standing at about 1 metre in height, the girth of the stem of the wild banana trees differ. The specimen recorded from Little Andaman had girth of less than 800 cm, however the specimens recorded from Campbell Bay had a larger girth of about 10 cm," Dr. Singh said.

**Specimens on display** After the discovery of the infructescence, specimens have been sent to museums across the country including the Indian Museum in Kolkata, where a 4.2-metre-long specimen has been on display in the industrial sector of the Botanical Survey of India for several months. Another specimen over four metres is in the Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre museum.

Since the species has been assessed as 'Critically Endangered', as a part of *in-situ* conservation of *Musa indandamanensis*, its saplings have been introduced in the Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Indian Botanic Garden in Howrah, Botanical Garden of Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre in Port Blair. What makes the wild banana *Musa indandamanensis* important is its natural genetic resource for plant breeders to develop high yielding and disease-resistant varieties.

## Total Fertility Rate in India remains at 2.0; Bihar records highest count, Bengal lowest

There has been a gradual decline in the share of population in the age group of 0-14 from 41.2% in 1971 to 24.8% in 2021, shows the Sample Registration System report for 2021 released by the RGJ

**Vijaya Singh**  
NEW DELHI

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR), the average number of children born to women over their lifetime, in the country has remained at 2.0 in 2021, the same as in 2020, shows the Sample Registration System (SRS) report for 2021 released by the Registrar-General of India (RGI) on May 7.

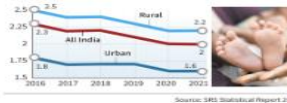
Bihar reported the highest TFR at 3.0, while Delhi and West Bengal reported the lowest of 1.4.

The report said there had been a gradual decline in the share of population in the age group of 0-14 from 41.2% in 1971 to 24.8% in 2021. The "proportion of the economically active population between 15-59 years has increased from 33.4% to 66.2% during the same period", the report said.

The population has gone up from 5.3% to 5.9% for the 65-plus age group and 6% to 9% for the 60-plus age group.

## A static trend

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) for the country has remained at 2.0 in 2021 and 2020. The chart shows the TFR for 2016-2021.



Source: SRS Statistical Report 2021

During the 2024 Interim Budget, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced a high-power committee to consider the challenges arising from "population growth and demographic changes."

Though the committee is yet to be formed, the announcement suggested there has been "fast" population growth in the country, however the SRS data says otherwise.

A comprehensive pattern will emerge after the Census is conducted, pending since 2021 and which was last conducted in 2011.

As Census is usually conducted every 10 years, the SRS is the largest demographic survey in the country mandated to provide annual estimates of fertility and mortality indicators at the State and national level.

The survey was conducted in 3,84,022 sample units across all States, covering about 84 lakh sample population.

**Elderly population** Kerala recorded the highest percentage of population

in the age group of 60 and above with 14.4% of the total population falling under this category. Tamil Nadu 12.9% and Himachal Pradesh 12.3% are the other two States with the highest percentage of elderly population, the report said.

On the other hand, Bihar 6.9%, Assam 7% and Delhi 7.1% have the lowest percentage of the population in the age group of 60 and above.

The mean age at effective marriage for females has increased from 19.3 years in 1980 to 22.5 years in 2021.

"It is noteworthy that the replacement level TFR, viz. 2.1, has been maintained at the national level, along with Delhi 1.4, West Bengal 1.4, Tamil Nadu 1.5, Andhra Pradesh 1.5, Jammu and Kashmir 1.5, Kerala 1.5, Maharashtra 1.5, Punjab 1.5, Himachal Pradesh 1.6, Telangana 1.6, Karnataka 1.6, Odisha 1.8, Uttarakhand and Gujarat 2.0, Jharkhand 2.0 and Assam 2.1," the report said.

## Foreign investors inject ₹14,167 crore in equities this month

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

Foreign investors continue to show confidence in the country's equity market, infusing ₹14,167 crore so far this month, largely driven by favourable global cues and robust domestic fundamentals.

Notably, this inflow has come despite the ongoing military tensions between India and Pakistan.

This positive momentum follows a net investment of ₹4,223 crore in April, marking the first inflow after three months, data with the depositories showed.

Prior to this, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) had pulled out ₹1,973 crore in March, ₹14,574 crore in February, and a substantial ₹78,027 crore in January.

Going ahead, global macro (declining dollar, slowing U.S. and Chinese economy) and domestic macro (high GDP growth, and declining inflation and interest rates) will facilitate increasing FPI inflow into the Indian equity. V.K. Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments, said.

However, debt inflows are likely to remain very



India's equity markets witnessed a sharp resurgence in FPI activity in April.

low, he added. According to the data from the depositories, FPIs made a net investment of ₹14,167 crore in equities in this month (till May 9). The latest flow has helped narrow the outflow to ₹8,164 crore in 2023 so far.

India's equity markets witnessed a sharp resurgence in FPI activity in April, signalling a marked reversal from the outflow seen earlier this year. The momentum continued in May too.

This renewed momentum was underpinned by a blend of favourable global cues and robust domestic fundamentals that bolstered investor confidence. Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar Investment, said.

## UGC asks institutions to increase seats, admit more foreign students

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The University Grants Commission has asked all higher education institutions (HEIs), through a recent circular, to furnish the details of foreign students they have enrolled for their courses.

It advised the HEIs to implement a 2022 circular on creating up to 25% "superannuated seats" for international students, over and above their total sanctioned enrolment for all programmes.

UGC Secretary Manish R. Joshi said in a letter to all HEIs that the implementation of the 2022 guidelines will facilitate smooth and visible admission of international students and a favourable environment will be created to make the HEIs a preferred destination for international students.

Prof. Joshi said in the letter that the HEIs should adopt and implement the guidelines for admission and



The UGC Secretary says internationalisation of higher education is one of the essential aspects of the NEP. Source: UGC

higher education is one of the essential aspects of the National Education Policy (NEP), and many Indian HEIs are now committed to increasing their global outreach.

**In letter and spirit** "Subsequently, in order to implement the internationalisation of Indian HEIs, the University Grants Commission has framed the guidelines for admission and

The objective of the 2022 guidelines is to facilitate a simple admission process for international students in HEIs

and provide superannuated seats for international students in letter and spirit. The objective of the 2022 guidelines was to facilitate a smooth and simple admission process for international students in HEIs, and it allowed Indian HEIs to admit international students based on the equivalence of entry qualification held by them.

"The equivalence is to be determined by the UGC or any other body recognised by UGC for such purpose or the concerned regulatory bodies of the country. HEIs may adopt a transparent admission process for admitting the international students," the circular had said.

## SUDOKU

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## FAITH

## Leading a simple, good life

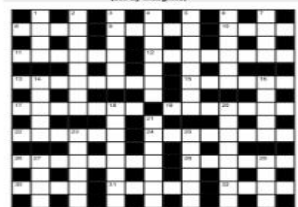
People may face difficulties and struggles, and their problems may follow them wherever they go. A person may face certain consequences if he becomes an migrant, fights with elders, or thinks ill of the host who entertained him, allowed him to stay and offered food.

Trichy Sri Kalyanaraman said in a discourse that the Mahabharata provides apt examples of how various people led pious and straightforward lives. We should show pity and sympathise with our relatives who suffer. Because his brother Pandu's sons lived in the forest, Vidura chose to stay in a small hut, though he occupied a significant position in the Kaurava's kingdom. Even the grandiose Bhishma, though he lived in the palace, led a simple life. We should not go after name, fame, or money. Only a steadfast and disciplined life will bring God's grace.

Saint Tyagaraja refused to accept a coveted post offered by the king, Swamy Vedanta Desika, who eked out his living by seeking alms, once found a small gold coin in the rice pot dropped by a household, and the Acharya pushed it as a worm. On his mission to Hastinapura, Lord Krishna chose to stay at Vidura's hut, who was excited in great joy, told whether his hut was the milk ocean or the receding bed of Adishesha or the peepal leaf on which Lord Krishna rested during the time of great deluge. Krishna vehemently refused to stay at the palace of Duryodhana, and when questioned, he replied that one could not think of a person who offered food and shelter. Duryodhana floated in the air, boasting that he had mastered the support of hundreds of kings to defeat the Pandavas, but failing to recognise that he was bereft of Krishna's support.

## TH CROSSWORD

(Set by Imogen)



## Across

1. Saint has desire to get one tailless fish (3)
2. Living barrels, ties snare inside ship (3)
3. Slave actress and must vendor (7)
4. Cigarettes... and parts worn by queen (7)
5. Indian father retreats with pain (8)
6. Hate program and set up (8)
7. Left one foot behind cake construction for refurbishment (4-6)
8. Steady and least shaky around top of base (3)
9. Food item first removed from soft fruit concoction (4)
10. Lift anchor around one (5)
11. Assist that chap with record (4)

## Down

1. Type of text one may expect during Dental Examination (4)
2. Revolt moves around military leader's plot (3)
3. Force old boy to apply gel around top of injury (4)
4. Ride, surrounded by explosive stuff, to produce missile (7)
5. A mine gas that turns into a mineral (3)
6. Inventor's dream (3)
7. Mafia boss's headgear is next to Oscar's head (4)
8. Parity true... People's representative can be president (5)
9. City is average at first (3)
10. Yes, I went around in vision (3)
11. Has Oprah wrongly spent 100 million euros? (7)
12. Murderer has a point to become an officer (7)
13. Little one hugging that lady is an angel (3)
14. Language Papi has to translate (6)
15. Very eager, in the past, to go before girl (4)
16. Small Yankee flower (4)

# Total Fertility Rate in India remains at 2.0; Bihar records highest count, Bengal lowest

There has been a gradual decline in the share of population in the age group of 0-14 from 41.2% in 1971 to 24.8% in 2021, shows the Sample Registration System report for 2021 released by the RGI

**Vijaita Singh**  
NEW DELHI

**T**he Total Fertility Rate (TFR), the average number of children born to women over their lifetime, in the country has remained at 2.0 in 2021, the same as in 2020, shows the Sample Registration System (SRS) report for 2021 released by the Registrar-General of India (RGI) on May 7.

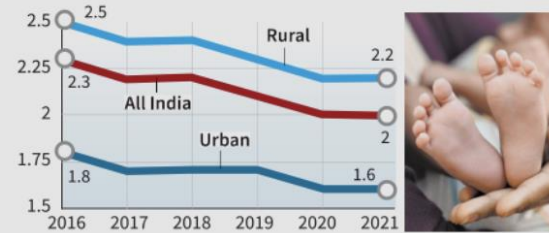
Bihar reported the highest TFR at 3.0, while Delhi and West Bengal reported the lowest of 1.4.

The report said there had been a gradual decline in the share of population in the age group of 0-14 from 41.2% in 1971 to 24.8% in 2021. The “proportion of the economically active population between 15-59 years has increased from 53.4% to 66.2% during the same period”, the report said.

The population has gone up from 5.3% to 5.9% for the 65-plus age group and 6% to 9% for the 60-plus age group.

## A static trend

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) for the country has remained at 2.0 in 2021 and 2020. The chart shows the TFR for 2016-2021



Source: SRS Statistical Report 2021

During the 2024 interim Budget, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced a high-power committee to consider the challenges arising from “population growth and demographic changes.”

Though the committee is yet to be formed, the announcement suggested there has been “fast” population growth in the country, however the SRS data says otherwise.

A comprehensive pattern will emerge after the Census is conducted, pending since 2021 and

which was last conducted in 2011.

As Census is usually counted every 10 years, the SRS is the largest demographic survey in the country mandated to provide annual estimates of fertility and mortality indicators at the State and national level.

The survey was conducted in 8,842 sample units across all States, covering about 84 lakh sample population.

## Elderly population

Kerala recorded the highest percentage of popula-

tion in the age group of 60 and above with 14.4% of the total population falling under this category.

Tamil Nadu 12.9% and Himachal Pradesh 12.3% are the other two States with the highest percentage of elderly population, the report said.

On the other hand, Bihar 6.9%, Assam 7% and Delhi 7.1% have the lowest percentage of the population in the age group of 60 and above.

The mean age at effective marriage for females has increased from 19.3 years in 1990 to 22.5 years in 2021.

“It is noteworthy that the replacement level TFR, viz. 2.1, has been attained at the national level, along with Delhi 1.4, West Bengal 1.4, Tamil Nadu 1.5, Andhra Pradesh 1.5, Jammu and Kashmir 1.5, Kerala 1.5, Maharashtra 1.5, Punjab 1.5, Himachal Pradesh 1.6, Telangana 1.6, Karnataka 1.6, Odisha 1.8, Uttarakhand 1.8, Gujarat 2.0, Haryana 2.0 and Assam 2.1,” the report said.

## Key Points:

### 1. National TFR:

- The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in India remained at **2.0** in 2021, the same as in 2020.
- TFR indicates the average number of children born to a woman during her lifetime.
- Data sourced from the **Sample Registration System (SRS) report (2021)** released by the Registrar-General of India (RGI).

### 2. State-wise TFR:

- **Highest TFR:** Bihar (3.0)
- **Lowest TFR:** Delhi and West Bengal (1.4)

### 3. Decline in Youth Population:

- The share of population aged **0-14 years** declined from **41.2% in 1971** to **24.8% in 2021**.
- Economically active population (15-59 years) increased from **53.4% to 66.2%** during the same period.



#### 4. Elderly Population:

- Population share of the **65+ age group** rose from **5.3% to 5.9%**, and **60+ age group** increased to **6%**.
- **Kerala** reported the highest percentage of elderly population.
- **Tamil Nadu (12.9%)** and **Himachal Pradesh (12.3%)** had the highest proportion of elderly people (60+ years).
- **Bihar (6.9%), Assam (7%),** and **Delhi (7.1%)** had the lowest proportion of elderly population.

#### 5. Marriage and Fertility Patterns:

- Mean age at effective marriage for females increased from **19.3 years (1990)** to **22.5 years (2021)**.
- The **replacement level TFR (2.1)** has been attained nationally.
- States achieving replacement level include:
  - **Delhi (1.4)**
  - **West Bengal (1.4)**



- States achieving replacement level include:
  - **Delhi (1.4)**
  - **West Bengal (1.4)**
  - **Tamil Nadu (1.5)**
  - **Andhra Pradesh (1.5)**
  - **Jammu and Kashmir (1.5)**
  - **Karnataka (1.6)**
  - **Odisha (1.8)**
  - **Gujarat (2.0)**

## **6. Socio-economic Aspects:**

- During the **2024 Interim Budget**, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a high-level committee to address **population growth** and **demographic challenges**.
- The **SRS Survey** covered **8,842 sampling units** across all states, encompassing **84 lakh people**.

# 2025 World Economic Outlook Report





India achieves its goal of becoming the fourth-largest economy.



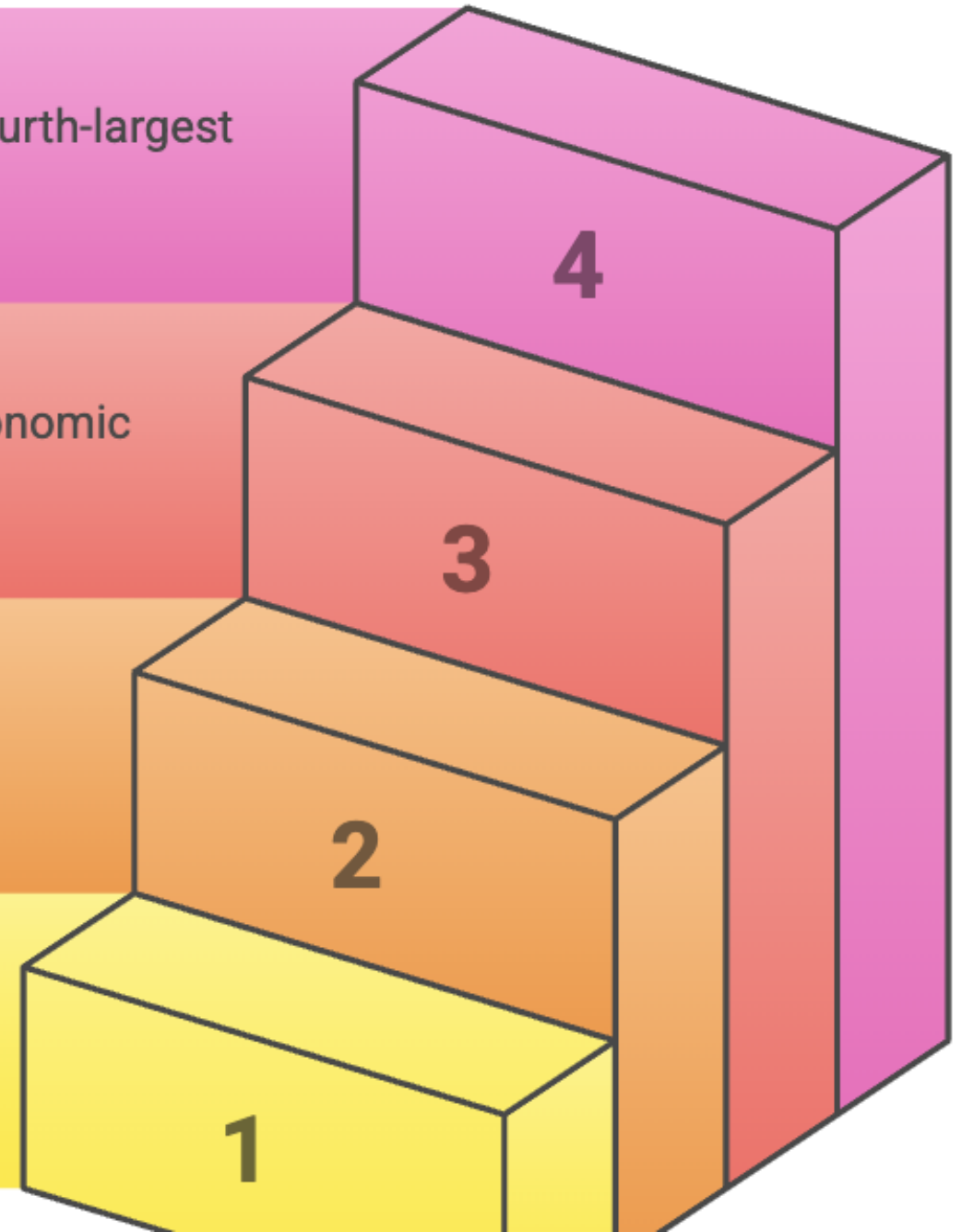
India is expected to overtake Japan in economic size.



The IMF forecasts India to become the fourth-largest economy by 2025.

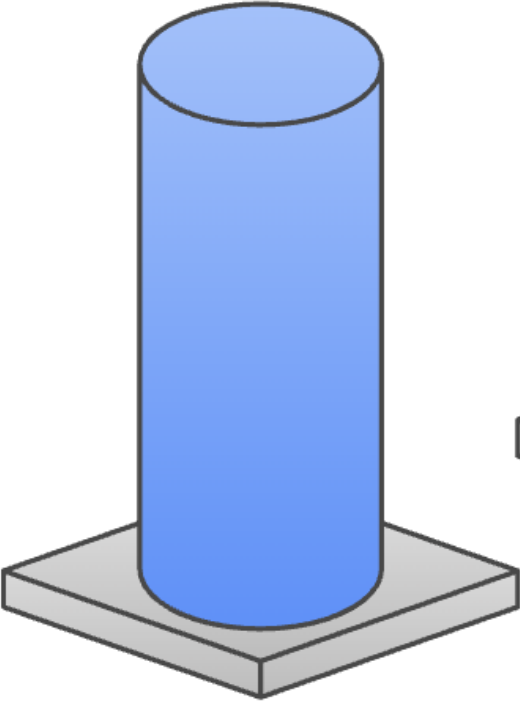


India is currently the fifth-largest economy globally.



Projected GDP Growth Rates for 2025

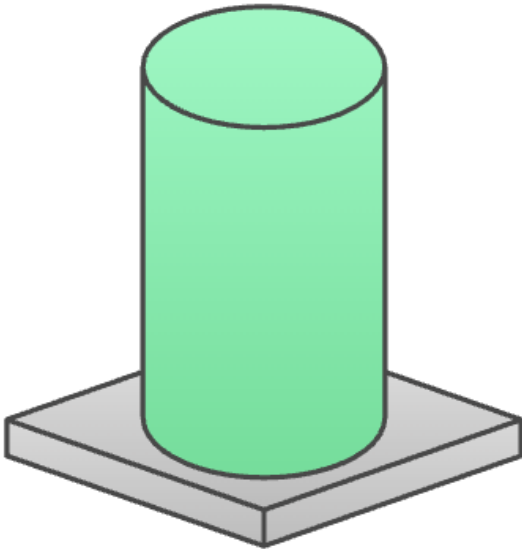
6.2%



**India**

Fastest-growing major economy

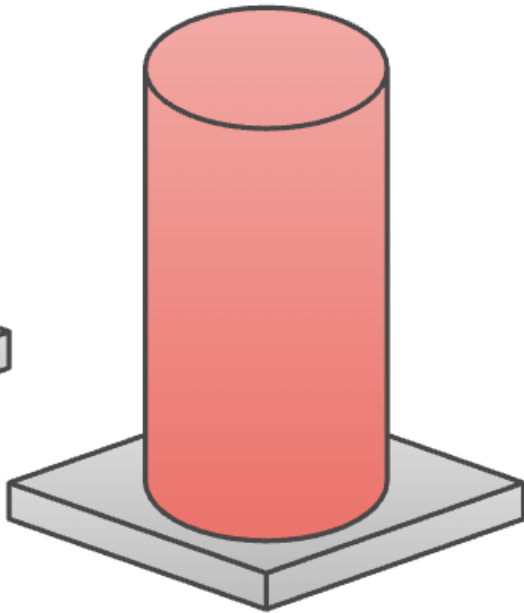
4.186%



**Japan**

Nominal GDP slightly below India

5.0%



**China**

Slower growth compared to India

# INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

- Estd. - 1944 (UN Bretton Woods Conference following Great Depression 1930s)
- Headquarters - Washington, DC, USA
- Functions -
  - » Global financial assistance
  - » Facilitate international trade
  - » Financing for developing countries
  - » Promotion of exchange rate stability
- Member States - 190 (India a founding member)

*India's FM is the ex-officio Governor on the Board of Governors of IMF*

- Special Drawing Rights (SDR) -
  - » IMF's intl. reserve asset to supplement the official reserves of its member countries (not a currency)

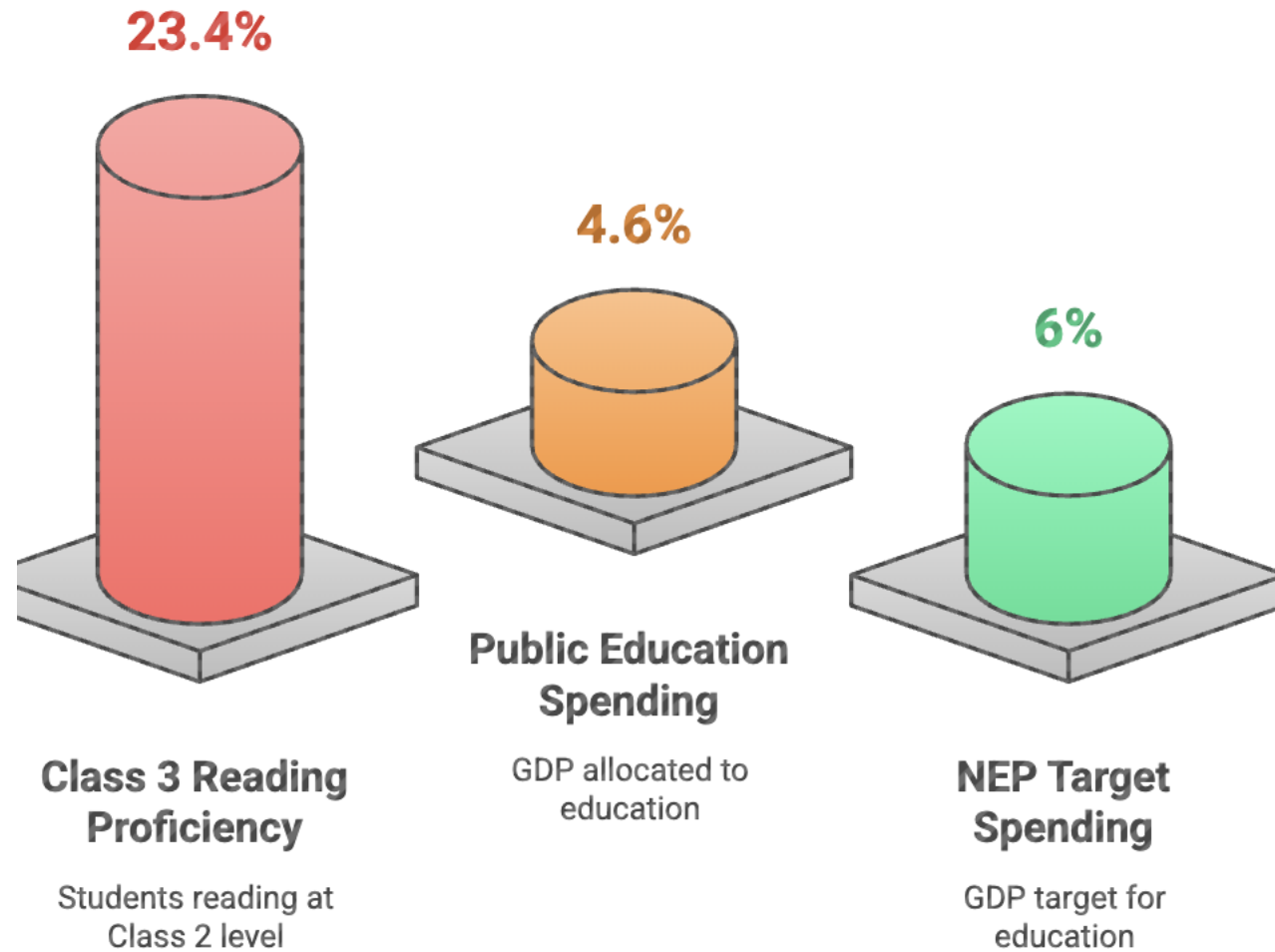
*Currencies in SDR Basket - \$, €, £, ¥ (Yen) and CN¥ (Renminbi)*

- IMF Quotas -
  - » Reflects a member country's relative position in world economy (India – 2.75%)
  - » Denominated in SDRs
- Flagship Publications -
  - » World Economic Outlook
  - » Global Financial Stability Report
  - » Fiscal Monitor
  - » External Sector Report



# State of School Education In India

## Performance and Spending in India's School Education



# Comparison of the Systems

## Old 10+2 Syst

10 years (school) + 2 years  
(higher secondary)

Memory power, theoretical  
knowledge

Rote-based, no practical  
learning

Lacked critical thinking,  
problem-solving, job-ready skills

### Structure

### Focus

### Exams

### Strengths

## New 5-3-3-4 System

5 (Foundational) + 3 (Preparatory)  
+ 3 (Middle) + 4 (Secondary)

Age-appropriate, practical, and  
holistic learning

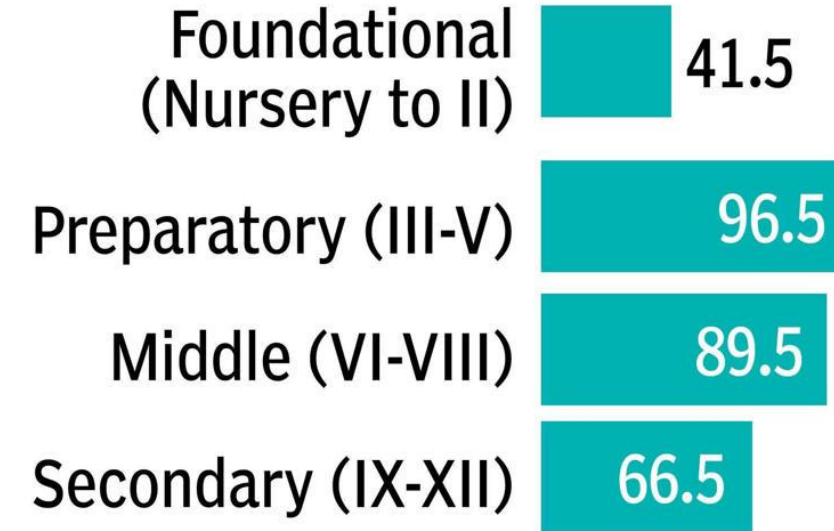
Comprehensive, skill-based  
assessment

Critical thinking, flexibility,  
modern skills (e.g, coding)

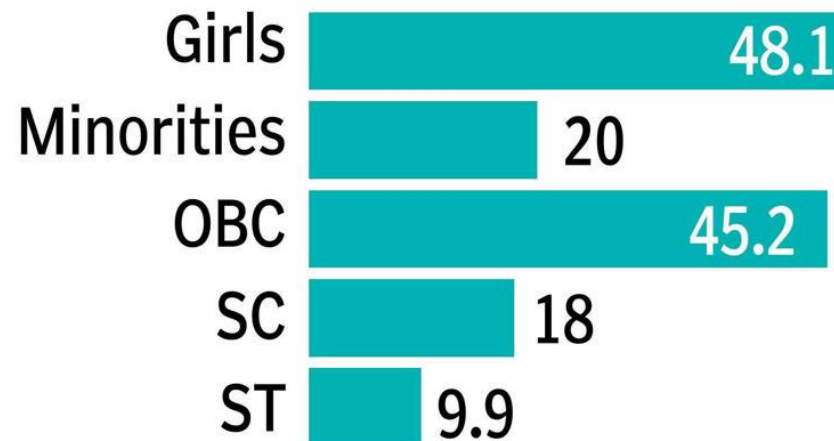
# HIGH ATTRITION

## Gross Enrolment Ratio

(%age Of Total Kids In School)



## %age Of Total Enrolments

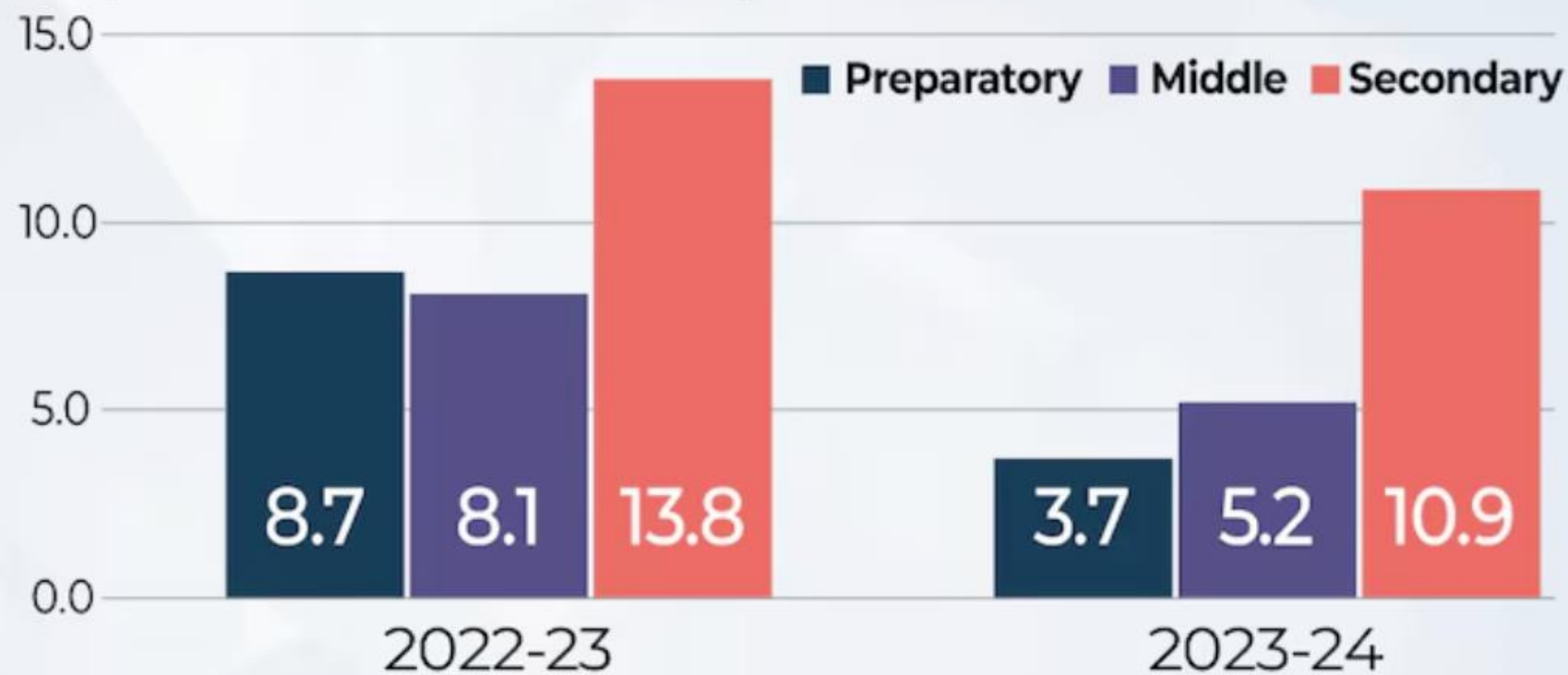




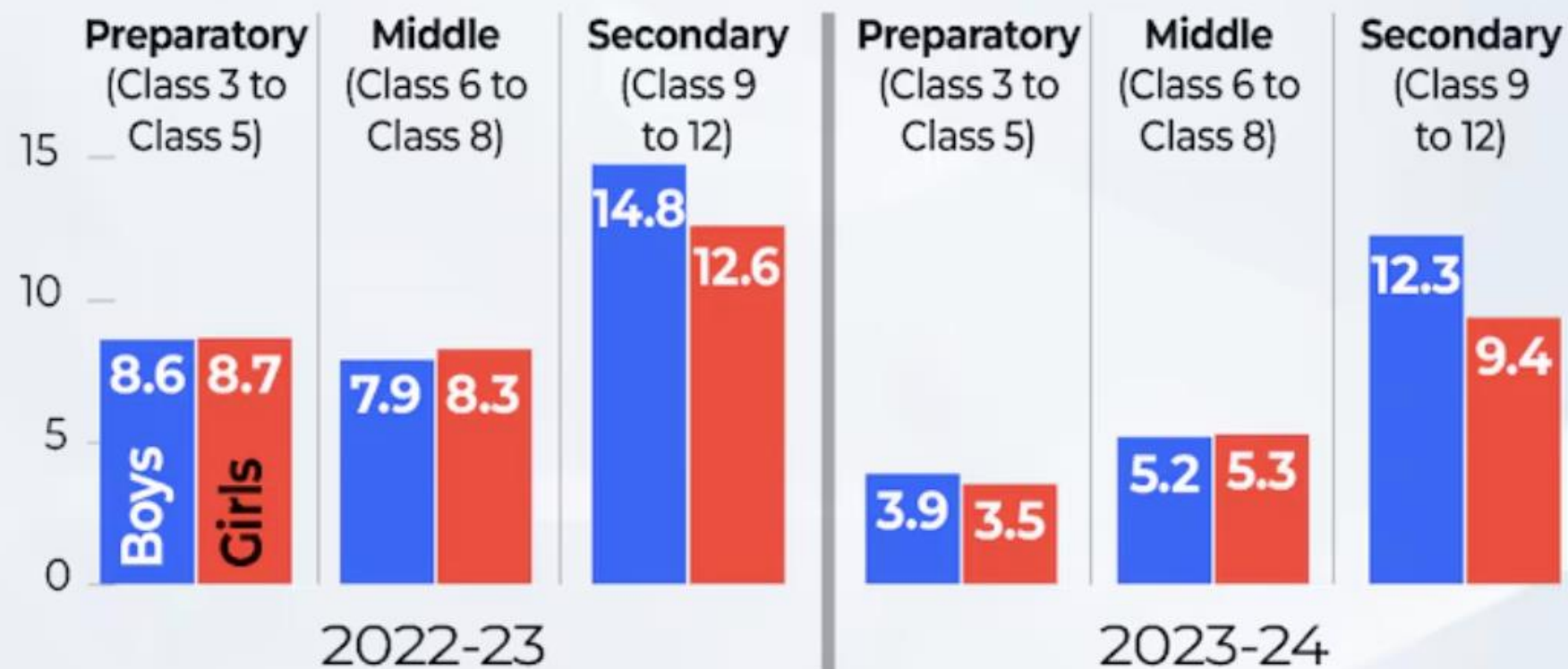
# More Students are Staying in School

Dropout rates declined in 2023-24 compared to the previous years

## Dropouts increase in secondary school



## Girls drop out more in lower classes, boys at secondary level

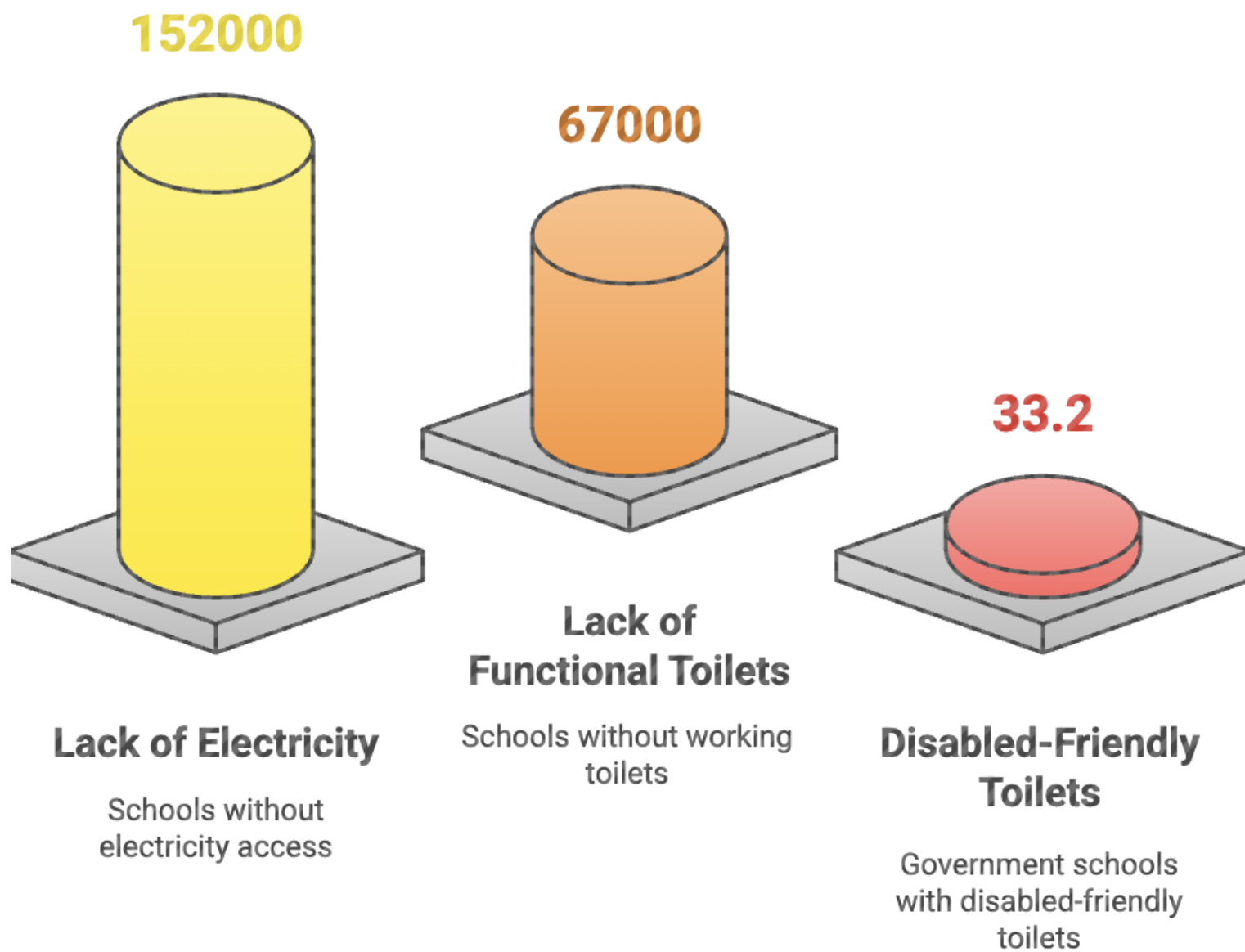


Source: UDISE + Report Ministry of Education

Graphic: Sarfaraz, Ankita Tiwari

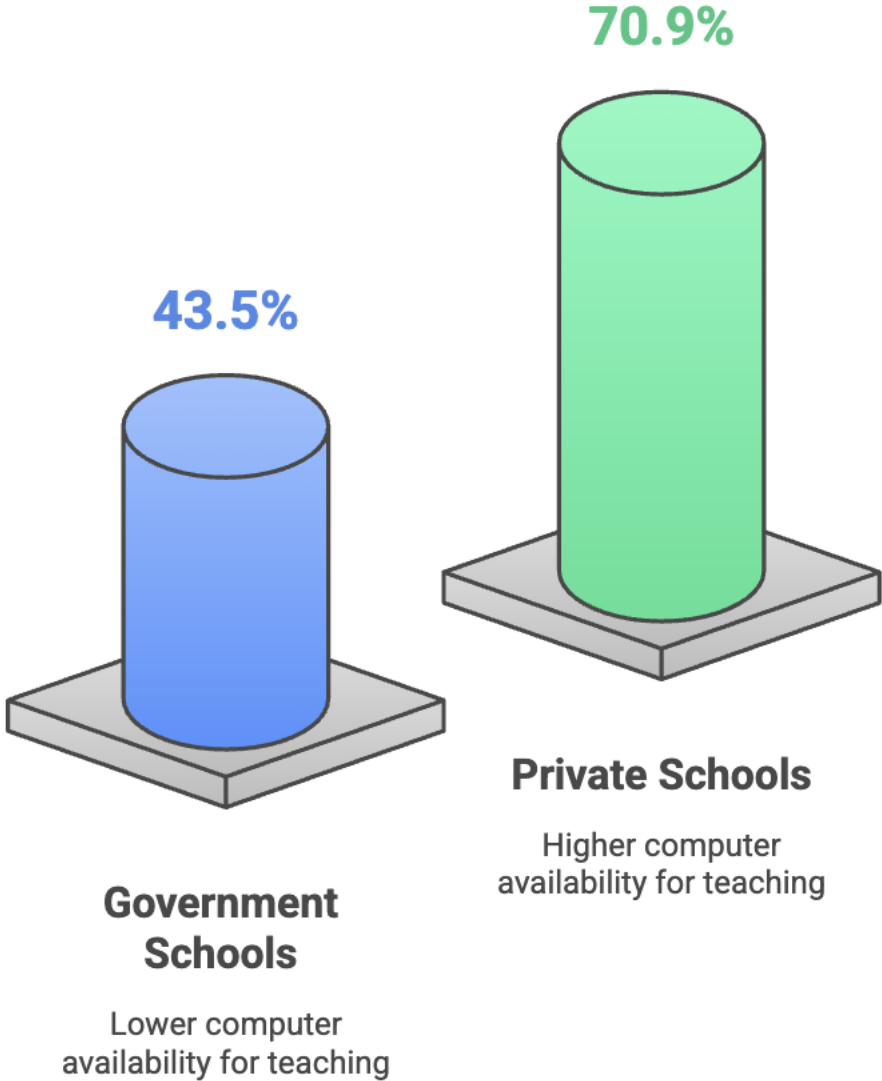


## Infrastructure Gaps in Indian Schools





Infrastructure Gaps in Indian Schools



# World Press Freedom Index

## Press Freedom Score



**Best Possible**

**100**

**Highest level of  
press freedom**



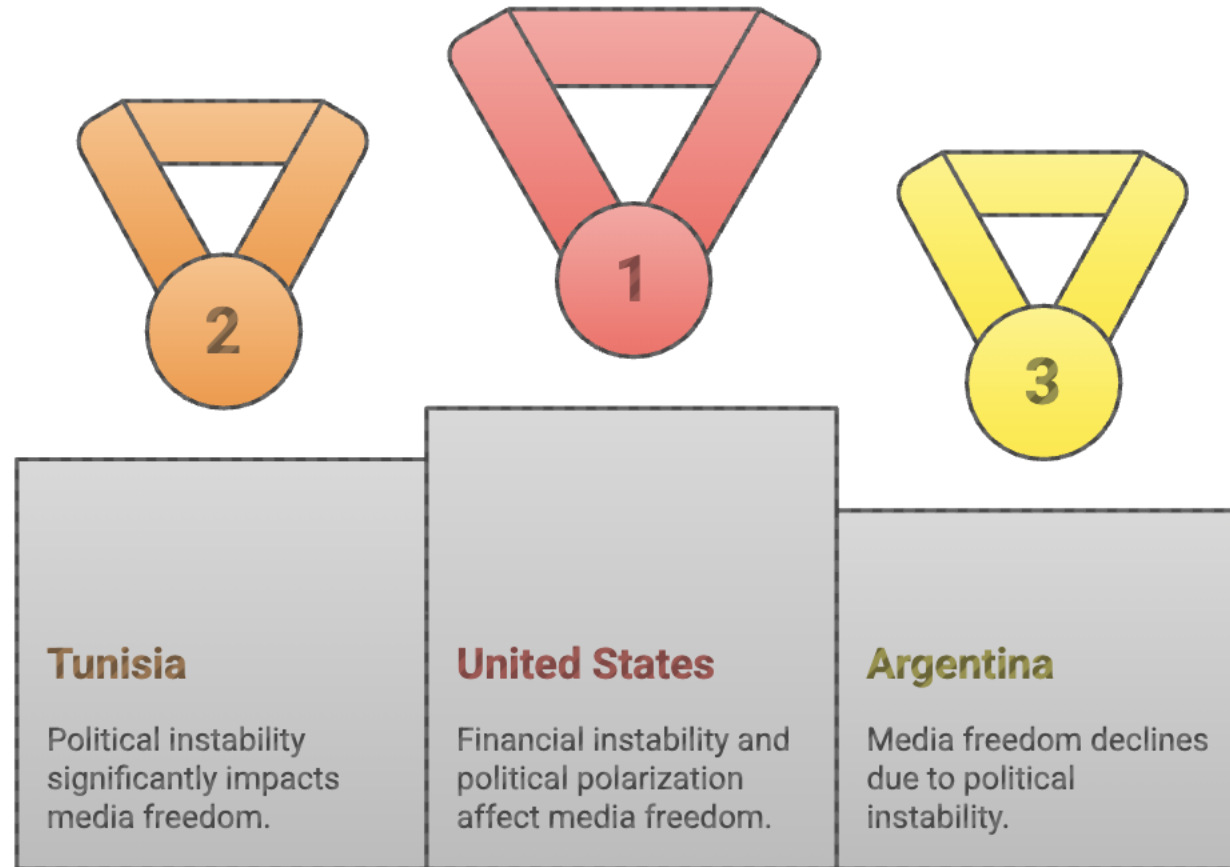
**Worst Possible**

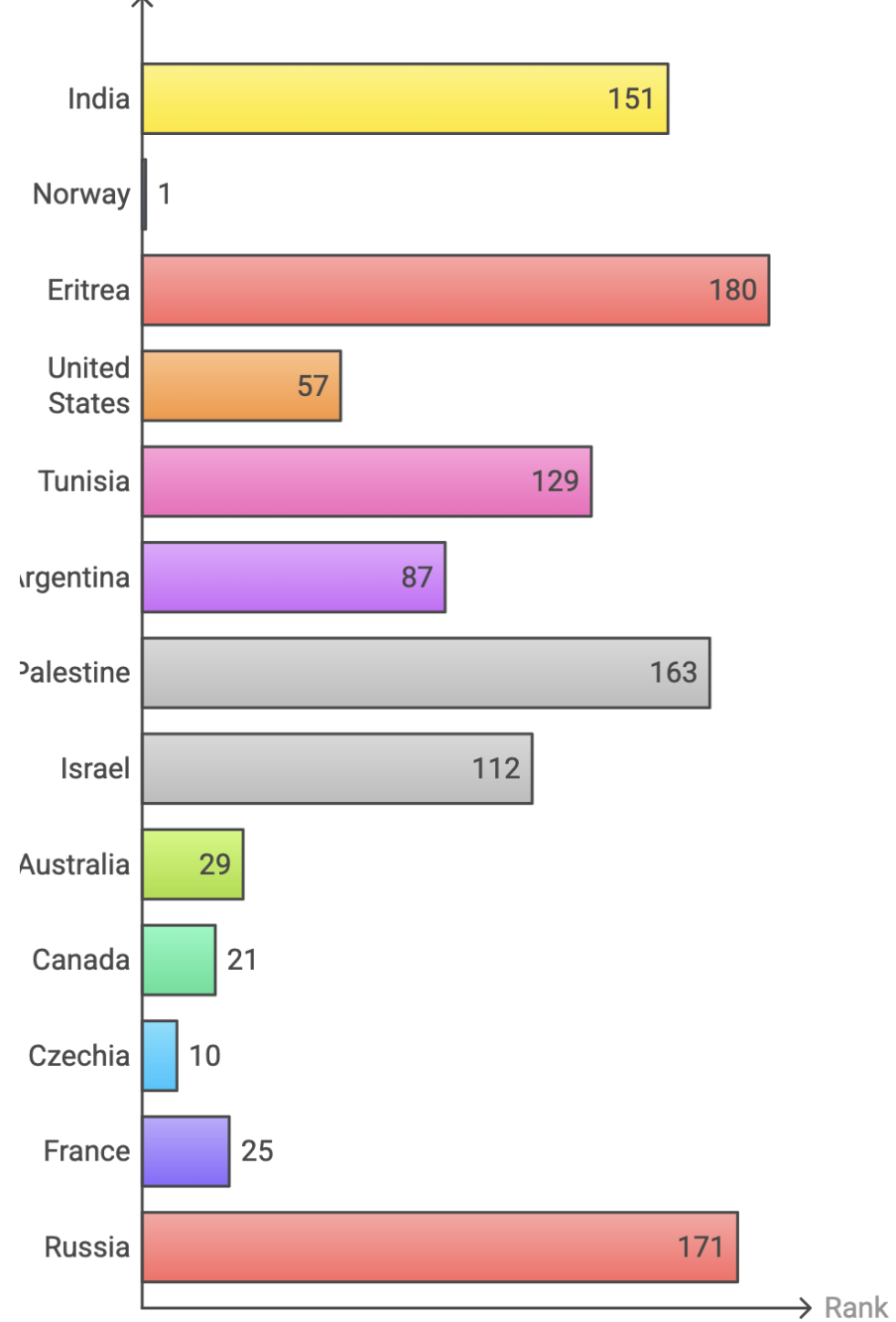
**0**

**Lowest level of  
press freedom**



## Top Countries with Media Freedom Challenges

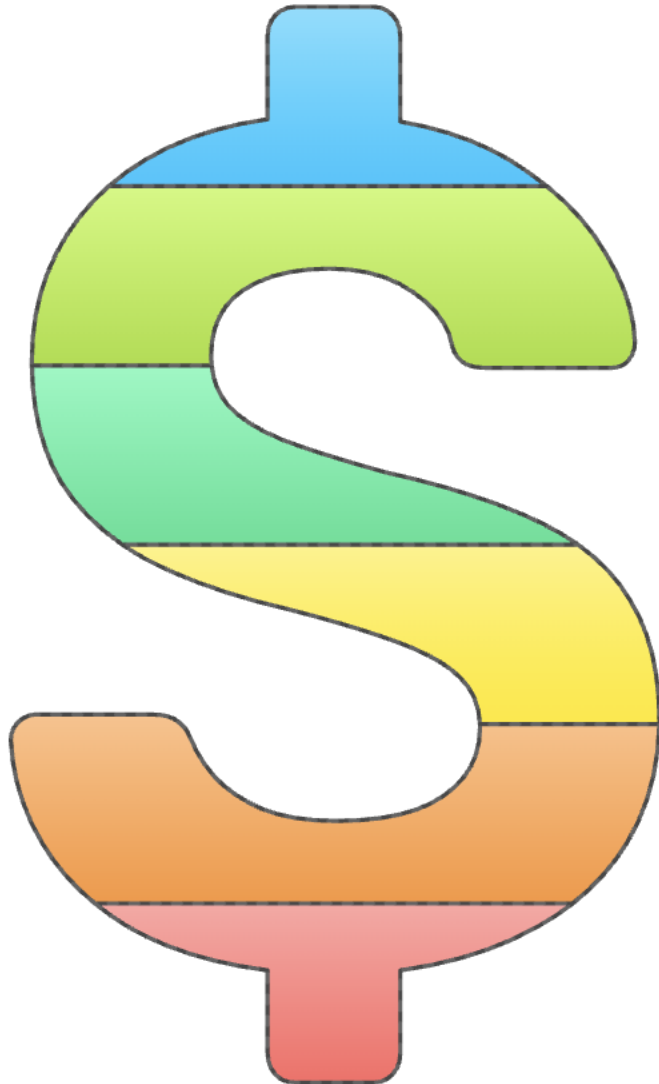




World Press Freedom Index Rankings 2025

# Bhutan Launches World's First Crypto Tourism Payment System

# Bhutan's Cryptocurrency Tourism Initiative



## **Binance Pay**

Facilitates digital payments for tourists



## **DK Bank**

Provides banking infrastructure for the system



## **Airfares**

Allows tourists to pay for flights with crypto



## **Visas**

Enables visa payments using digital currencies



## **Accommodations**

Offers crypto payment for lodging



## **Local Fruit**

Supports crypto purchases of local produce



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# Word of the day

## **Brine:**

water containing salts; a strong solution of salt and water used for pickling

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**Synonyms:** saltwater, seawater

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**Usage:** *The cucumbers are pickled in brine.*

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**Pronunciation:** [newsth.live/brinepro](http://newsth.live/brinepro)

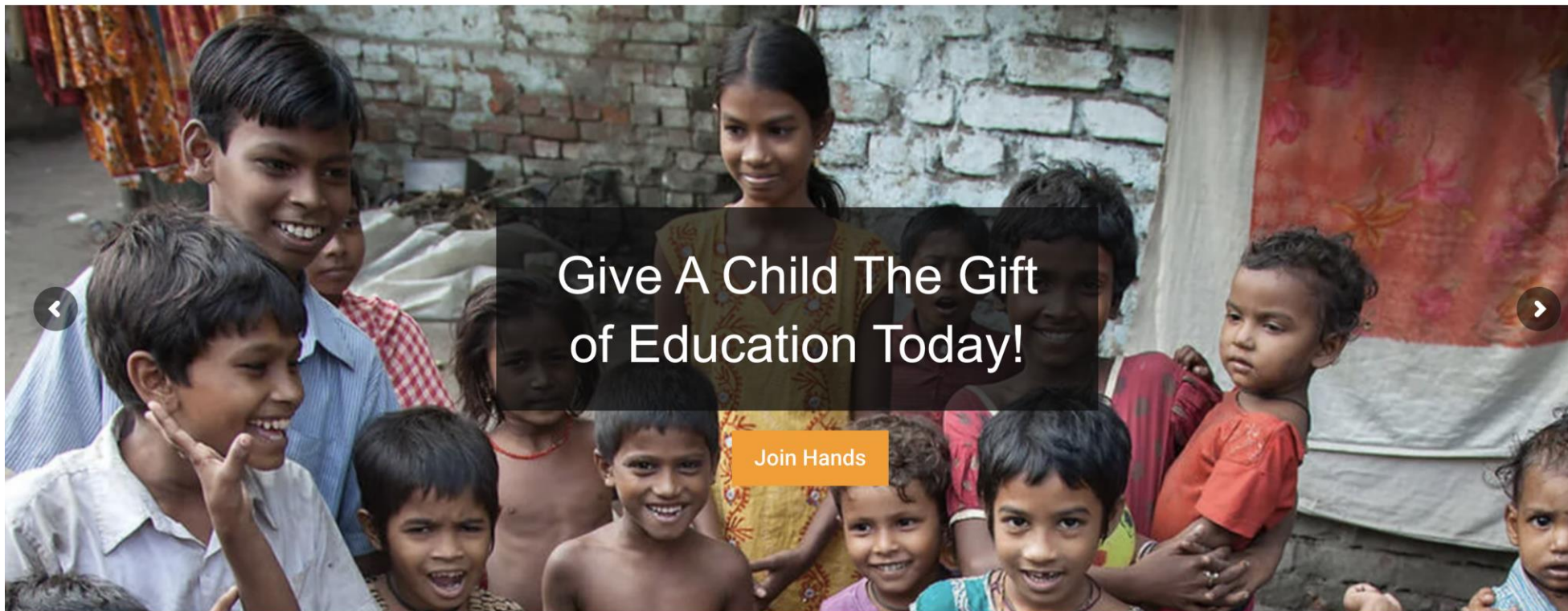
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**International Phonetic**

**Alphabet:** /bɹaɪn/

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**5,534**  
Volunteers



**671**  
Contributors



**1,231**  
Kids



**24**  
States



Thank you  
guys.

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