

Daily Current Affairs





4
The Hindu



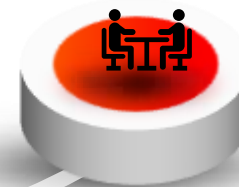
0
**PIB, PRS & Other
newspaper**



2
**The Indian
Express**



0
Jansatta



1
**Financial
Express**



A hiker with a backpack and trekking poles stands on a rocky mountain ridge, looking out over a vast mountain range under a dramatic, cloudy sky. The scene is illuminated by warm, golden light, suggesting sunrise or sunset. The hiker is positioned on the right side of the frame, facing left. The background features a series of jagged, snow-capped mountain peaks. The foreground shows a steep, rocky slope with some sparse vegetation and a winding path.

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OVERVIEW

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Centre softens stance on FCRA Bill following several appeals

Meetings with Christian groups, post by Trump ally, breaking the parliamentary deadlock among reasons behind move; Catholic Bishops' Conference of India and the National Council of Churches in India welcome the move to send Bill to JPC

Yashita Singh
NEW DELHI

The first indication of the Union government's softening of stance on the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, emerged on August 9, when several Christian organisations launched coordinated appeals on YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp, urging the Centre to either refer the Bill to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) or withdraw it altogether.

The appeals were seen as an attempt to provide the government with an honourable route to step back from pushing the legislation through Parliament.

On Wednesday, Minister of State for Home Piyush Garg moved a motion in the Lok Sabha to send the Bill to a JPC. Amid this, the motion was dropped, giving Parliament more time to examine the con-



Union Minister Anil Shah with a delegation of church leaders on Wednesday.

tentious provisions in the Bill. Ever since the Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on March 25, Opposition parties have protested the legislation. It was among the bunch of Bills listed for passage in the ongoing Monsoon Session of Parliament, which concludes on August 15.

The Bill seeks way for the appointment of a "designated authority" to take over, manage, or dispose of assets created from foreign funds when an NGO's FCRA registration is sus-

Joint Action Forum on Missionaries, said the Home Minister granted an audience after they wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "We had given a representation to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister's Office forwarded it to the Home Minister, and we were called by the Home Minister for a meeting," Mr. Wilson said.

Conciliatory move
Government sources said the subsequent decision to refer the Bill to a JPC was a conciliatory move aimed at breaking the parliamentary deadlock, with Opposition parties continuing to demand a discussion on the police action against protesters on July 29.

The statement made by U.S. Congressman Riley Moore, a close ally of U.S. President Donald Trump, on August 4 on social media, alleged that the Bill could permit government take-

overs of churches and religious charities, was also one of the reasons for the rethink, sources said.

In the post, the Republican politician described the bill as a "clear attack against Christians" and warned that the issue could become a concern in India-U.S. relations.

On Wednesday, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBI) and the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) welcomed the move, saying it was a "positive step".

Jonathan Lalremruata, a Christian leader, told The Hindu that the legislation should differentiate between major and minor offences before the assets built by an NGO are taken over.

"Regulation of foreign funds is a must. Action should be taken against those NGOs which indulge in subversive activities," Mr. Lalremruata said, adding that the government was ready to debate the issue with their suggestions.

Opposition 'fled' from meaningful debate in Parliament: Nabin

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

BJP president Nitin Nabin on Wednesday accused the Congress and other Opposition parties of avoiding parliamentary debate and disrupting the Monsoon Session, alleging that they were "neither serious nor earnest" about issues concerning the people.

"Parliament is the sacred temple of democracy where the direction of the country is determined through meaningful discussions on the people's issues, but in this Monsoon Session, the irresponsible Congress fled from discussions and repeatedly shifted its goalsposts, thereby tearing apart the democratic discourse and dignity of the country," he said on social media platform X.

"In reality, Congress has

betrayered the people of the country. Throughout the entire session, the conduct of Rahul Gandhi and the entire Opposition exposes their aversive mindset and intention to avoid thinking. The whole session is nearly over, yet they were not ready for a serious discussion on even a single issue," Mr. Nabin said.

He said first, the Congress derailed a discussion on youth issues, and when the government was fully prepared for it, the party and its allies "backed out, claiming they did not want any discussion at all."

"We would be exposed" Mr. Nabin said, the Opposition parties "were fleeing from discussions" because they feared that their "lies" would be exposed when the Union Home Minister spoke in Parliament.

In 'era of reels', avoid shortcuts, read autobiographies, Modi tells youth

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged young people in the "era of reels" not to take shortcuts and instead read autobiographies of the people they admired to get a unique perspective on his political events.

Speaking at the launch of former President Ram Nath Kovind's autobiography, *Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles*, he said Mr. Kovind's life story is a testament to the fact that the termination could help a person overcome adversity and rise to the highest constitutional office.

Mr. Modi appealed to the youth to read autobiographies as such books offered the opportunity to understand a particular person through the life of someone who had expe-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with former president Ram Nath Kovind during the launch of latter's autobiography in New Delhi.

rienced it. "This is the era of reels. Social media influences often pull you in and take you down certain paths. In this age of shortcuts, let us remember a message often displayed at railway stations: a shortcut will cut you short. This is written when the Centre and the Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP) have stepped up efforts to engage with Gen Z on social media.

He highlighted Mr. Kovind's continuing public engagement, saying that the former President had been active in various capacities, including in his office, and was working on the simultaneous election initiative, which could, Mr. Modi said, "open a new chapter in Indian democracy." "We need many more young people who would be like Mr. Kovind in the future — people who are not defeated by circum-

stances but possess the determination to overcome every challenge," he said.

Mr. Kovind recalled hardships in his childhood and the values he imbibed from his surroundings.

Lok Sabha Speaker G. Prasad, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, and several Union Ministers attended the event.

Uproar over BJP MP's remark against John Brittas in Rajya Sabha

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha functioned for about 20 minutes in the pre-lunch session on Wednesday before an uproar over BJP MP John Brittas' allegation that BJP MP Sushmita Devi had addressed him as "burr" during proceedings earlier this week.

After the House was adjourned, Opposition MPs staged a protest at Makar Sankranti, the main entrance to Parliament House. Several MPs were seen waving a banner of protest and raised slogans celebrating "unity in diversity".

Soon after listed parties were laid on the table of the House, Mr. Brittas raised the issue, describing it as a matter concerning the dignity of the House

and respect for India's diversity.

Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan, in his ruling, said members should avoid remarks that could hurt the sentiments of fellow MPs.

"Certain instances have come to my notice regarding discursive and undignified comments being made by members interrupting the speech of other members in the House. I would advise all honours-able members should be careful not to hurt the sentiments and feelings of fellow members," he said.

"No message from this House should go that any member wants division in India whether culturally or on the basis of religion," Mr. Dev said.

RS passes Bills to change name of Kerala, strengthen co-operative corporation

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Wednesday passed two more Bills — the National Co-operative Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026. The House has so far passed about 10 Bills, other than some of the Money Bills which were returned to the Lok Sabha, during the Monsoon Session.

In the reply to a debate on the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, Minister of State for Home Rajyashree Narayan Rai said the Bill was a step in continuation of the Kerala Assembly's resolution in 2024 urging the Union government to change the name of the State to Kerala.

The Minister maintained that the Union government was committed to removing all symbols of slavery, names, signs, flags



Union Minister Anil Shah with a delegation of church leaders on Wednesday.

of institutions, or statues of great personalities that repeatedly evoked the hearts of Indians and establish all the national symbols that represent the pride of this heritage.

The NCC Bill was introduced in the State over disciplinary action against a teacher who prepared a quiz questionnaire directly to cooperative societies. Minister of State for Home V.D. Savarkar as the freedom fighter "also received the maximum punishment at the hands of the British." If a teacher is dismissed for asking questions about

Keshavadas Balaraman
NEW DELHI

The three-member committee constituted to investigate the discovery of the official residence of Justice Yashwant Varma has said that the former judge withdrew from the panel's proceedings last week.

The panel's report, in a way, responds to questions asked by the committee as to why it chose to continue its work and admit the report to Parliament even after Justice Varma ceased to be a part of the investigation, with immediate effect, on April 9.

The NCC Bill was tabled in Parliament on Wednesday, found the charges against Justice Varma "proven" and holding that his explanation to the committee was "not satisfactory". The discovery of the currency notes occurred in the national capital when he was a Delhi High Court judge.



Union Minister Anil Shah with a delegation of church leaders on Wednesday.

April 9, the former Allahabad High Court judge had refused to participate in the proceedings. Parallel communications were sent to the President and Chief Justice of India on the same day.

The Varma's "proven" holding that his explanation to the committee was "not satisfactory". The discovery of the currency notes occurred in the national capital when he was a Delhi High Court judge. In a communication sent to the committee on

"evidence has substantially

come on record". It said the articles of charges against the judge had already been framed, defence statements had been received, material to be relied upon for the inquiry had been supplied and inspection done, applications had been heard and decided, nine witnesses had already been examined, and documents and electronic material had been examined. Even the examination had been cross-examined on behalf of the judge himself. "The proceedings had crossed the stage of the inquiry, arrangement and entered, and substantially completed, the evidentiary stage," the report said.

The inquiry committee said Justice Varma was given a reasonable opportunity to make his case before it. It said the inquiry could proceed even in the absence of the judge if there was sufficient proof that he was given the opportunity to join the proceedings.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid vocal protests by Opposition members, the Lok Sabha passed a Bill on Wednesday to amend the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act without a debate.

The Lok Sabha took up the Bill for passage after a couple of adjournments earlier in the day but at most immediately the Opposition trooped into the well of the House and started shouting slogans.

Revolutionary Socialist Party MP N.K. Prasad had strongly opposed the Bill, arguing that it was against federalism.

When the Chair, Jagdeep Singh, put the Bill to vote, Opposition members started shouting "Adani, Adani".

After the Bill passed, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kishu Garg objected to the Bill of the House. He said the government was ready to debate the issue of student protest



Union Minister Anil Shah with a delegation of church leaders on Wednesday.

over the NEET paper leaks and urged the Opposition to start discussion.

He also said Union Home Minister Anil Shah was ready to answer questions and inform the House that Mr. Shah had written to the Speaker seeking a debate.

Meanwhile, Mr. Dalip Singh, Union Minister for Coal and Mines, said the Bill had created uncertainty in the mineral sector and could raise costs, encourage imports and undermine domestic supply chains.

He also said Union Home Minister Anil Shah was ready to answer questions and inform the House that Mr. Shah had written to the Speaker seeking a debate.

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In 'era of reels', avoid shortcuts, read autobiographies, Modi tells youth

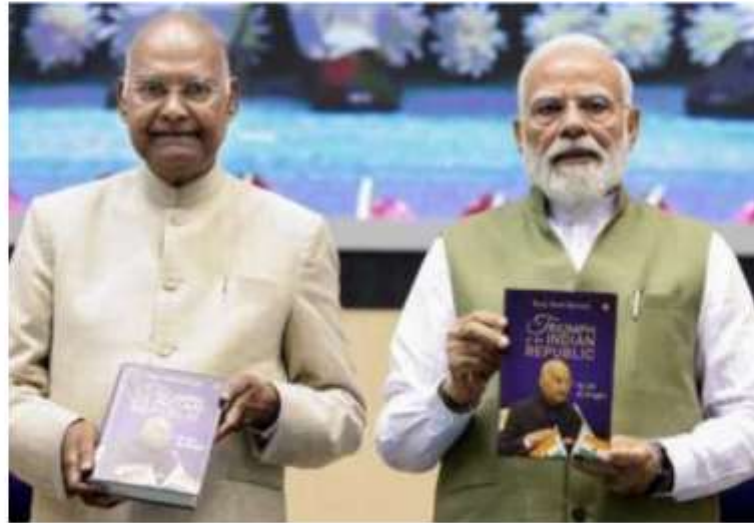
The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday urged young people in the “era of reels” not to take shortcuts, and instead read autobiographies of the people they admired to get a unique perspective on historical events.

Speaking at the launch of former President Ram Nath Kovind's autobiography, *Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles*, he said Mr. Kovind's life showed how determination could help a person overcome adversity and rise to the highest constitutional office.

Mr. Modi appealed to the youth to read autobiographies as such books offered the opportunity to understand a particular period through the life of someone who had expe-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with former president Ram Nath Kovind during the launch of latter's autobiography in New Delhi. PTI

rienced it.

“This is the era of reels. Social media influencers often pull you in and take you down certain paths. In this age of shortcuts, let us remember a message often displayed at railway stations: a shortcut will cut you short. This is written because some people have a habit of jumping onto the

tracks instead of using the railway bridge. However, if there is a shortcut you should take to get ahead in life, it is to read the autobiography of someone you admire,” Mr. Modi said.

Engaging with Gen Z

His remarks come at a time when the Centre and the Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP) have stepped up efforts to engage with Gen Z on social media.

He highlighted Mr. Kovind's continuing public engagement, saying that the former President had not rested after demitting office, and was working on the simultaneous election initiative, which could, Mr. Modi said, “open a new chapter in Indian democracy”. “We need many more young people who would be like Kovindji in future – people who are not defeated by circumstances but possess the determination to overcome every challenge,” he said.

Mr. Kovind recalled hardships in his childhood and the values he imbibed from his surroundings.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, and several Union Ministers attended the event.

Exam Point	Detail
Book	<i>Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles</i>
Author	Ram Nath Kovind
Category	Autobiography
Author's major office	14th President of India
Presidency	2017–2022
Released by	Prime Minister Narendra Modi
Major launch event	New Delhi, 12 August 2026
Publisher	Rupa Publications
Length	400 pages
Publication year	2026
Main subject	Kovind's personal journey, public life, struggles and years in India's highest constitutional office

Fact

Ram Nath Kovind was

Tenure

Predecessor

Successor

Before becoming President

Bihar Governor

Constitutional position of President

Executive power of Union

Election of President

Manner of election

Term

Qualification

Oath

Impeachment

Answer

14th President of India

25 July 2017 – 25 July 2022

Pranab Mukherjee

Droupadi Murmu

Governor of Bihar

2015–2017

Article **52**

Article **53**

Article **54**

Article **55**

Article **56**

Article **58**

Article **60**

Article **61**

Priority	Book	Author	Field / Identity	Year
● #1	Triumph of the Indian Republic: My Life, My Struggles	Ram Nath Kovind	Former President	2026
●	Mother Mary Comes to Me	Arundhati Roy	Author	2025
●	The Outsider: A Memoir for Misfits	Vir Das	Actor/comedian	2025
●	Bring It On: The Incredible Story of My Life	Deepa Malik	Paralympian	2025
●	Playing It My Way	Sachin Tendulkar	Cricket	2014
●	The Race of My Life	Milkha Singh	Athletics	2013
●	Unbreakable	Mary Kom	Boxing	2013
●	The Test of My Life	Yuvraj Singh	Cricket	2013
●	Ace Against Odds	Sania Mirza	Tennis	2016
●	A Shot at History	Abhinav Bindra	Shooting	2011
●	My Country, My Life	L. K. Advani	Politics	2008
●	One Life Is Not Enough	K. Natwar Singh	Diplomacy/Politics	2014
●	Justice for the Judge	Ranjan Gogoi	Former CJI	2021
●	Courage and Conviction	V. K. Singh	Army/Politics	2013
●	Straight from the Heart	Kapil Dev	Cricket	—

IN BRIEF



HC seeks clarity over Meto's policy on Rights Manager tool

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought clarity from Meto over its policy governing access to its Rights Manager tool, after content creators were raised that fraudulent actors have allegedly exploited the platform's copyright protection mechanism to target original content. Justice Anup Jaiswal directed Meto to place on record its norms and eligibility criteria for granting access to Rights Manager, along with the grounds on which applications for the tool may be rejected. The directions came during the hearing of a suit filed by a content creator.

NIA arrests accused in Manipur IED attack case

The NIA has arrested an accused in connection with the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attack at a residential house in Tromslandt Aung Lalak in Manipur's Moirang on April 7. A. P. Thakur allegedly handled finances for UNKA, a Kuki insurgent group that is not engaged in peace talks with the government. He was first arrested on July 25 by the Assam Rifles and the Charachandpur police. Two minor children were killed and another person was injured in the incident.

Panel asks govt. if it will push agenda for de-dollarisation

Arundhati K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, headed by senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, on Tuesday questioned the government on whether it plans to push a de-dollarisation agenda at the BRICS Summit to be held in New Delhi in September.

The questions come against the backdrop of the Reserve Bank of India's repeated advocacy for linking the official digital currencies of BRICS countries to facilitate cross-border trade and tourism payments. The Central bank has argued that such a framework could reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar amid rising geopolitical tensions.

Members of the committee questioned why the government was not pursuing greater "financial sovereignty" that could help countries bypass U.S.



India assumed the rotating chairmanship of BRICS on January 1 and will lead it till end of 2008.

sanctions, sources said. India's efforts to establish a similar local currency trade mechanism with Russia had not taken off, they said, and sought to know whether India, as the host nation, would push a "BRICS-led" de-dollarisation agenda. U.S. President Donald Trump has repeatedly warned BRICS countries against creating an alternative currency or taking steps that could challenge the dollar's dominance, threatening punitive tariffs and other measures.

7 dead, several injured in landslide after heavy rain lashes Mumbai

Soil, debris from hillside collapsed onto houses in Ghatkopar in the early hours; search continues for missing person; Mayor inspects rescue work

Yashwantrao Chavan
Mumbai

Seven people were killed and several were injured after a landslide struck the Ghatkopar area in Mumbai in the early hours of Wednesday following heavy rain. The rescue operations are under way to trace one person believed to be trapped under the debris.

The incident occurred at 3.48 a.m. at Ghatkopar West. Soil and debris from the hillside collapsed onto two or three houses, according to Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Mayor Riju Pawde, who visited the site to inspect rescue operations.

Local people described being jolted awake by a loud noise from the collapse and running out from their homes. Sharda



A search and rescue operation is under way after a landslide struck Ghatkopar in Mumbai's Ghatkopar area on Wednesday.

sumel, who was affected by the landslide, said, "If they had worked a bit earlier, more lives would have been saved."

Mr. Pawde announced 24 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased person and ₹50,000 assistance for each injured person. One person remained trapped under the debris. Deputy Chief Fire Officer S. K. Yadav said as the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), along with around 50 BMC per-

sonnel, continued rescue efforts. The BMC had alerted residents and advised them not to stay in areas that are at risk of landslides or rock falls and to evacuate from such locations. "The BMC had already given notice, warning them to clear the area within 15 days. The owners of the house should be responsible for warning their tenants and heeding our warning," Sandhya Doshi, BMC corporation, said.

Nicobar project: tribal council says its concerns are being overlooked

Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Tribal leaders have accused the Andaman and Nicobar island administration of seeking to drag the Shompen, an isolated indigenous community into a "modern lifestyle" as part of the controversial GNT development project. The project, which is proposed to be built at Galathea, located near Shompen settlements.

According to the Tribal Council of Great and Little Nicobar, when its members raised concerns about the Shompen being disturbed by the ₹90,000-crore project at a meeting on July 16, then-Chief Secretary Chandra Bhushan Kumar said that the Shompen "cannot continue" living the way they do and that they must also "adopt a modern lifestyle" that will come with GNT development. He added that a settlement for the Shompen may be built when the project comes up, the Council alleged in a



Construction workers build a road cutting through forest land, as part of the Great Nicobar Island Project.

statement on Monday. Mr. Kumar, who was appointed Union Labour Secretary two weeks after that meeting, did not respond to The Hindu's queries in later directions issued by the administration. Later this week, the Council is set to meet with administration officials again to discuss plans for the township that is part of the GNT project.

At the July 16 meeting, which was meant to discuss the concerns of the Nicobar tribe, a larger indigenous community on the islands, about the pro-

posed GNT project, Council members reiterated their demand to relocate to their ancestral villages along the west coast of Greater Nicobar and asked why the project had not been sought with regard to the notification of wildlife reserves in the Nicobar group of islands.

The Tribal Council also says its concerns about the GNT project raised at the July 16 meeting were ignored, with any mention of them omitted in later directions issued by the administration. Later this week, the Council is set to meet with administration officials again to discuss plans for the township that is part of the GNT project.

Both demolition and rehabilitation duties of the govt., says SC

Krishnakumar Balaram
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday backed an NGO's petition that laments that the government has not had a policy for their rehabilitation. Chief Justice K. J. Somaya said, "If you want to demolish an unauthorized construction, the question for the government is 'do you also have a policy for their rehabilitation?'" Chief Justice K. J. Somaya said.

The laws surrounding demolition of unauthorized structures lack even an iota of "human rights" or "protection", counsel for the NGO said.

The Bench took note, in its order, that States allow unauthorized constructions to survive undisturbed for decades. The petition had urged the apex court to constitute an expert committee to formulate a uniform policy that reconciled demolition and rehabilitation. "Women and children are thrown into the streets. Shelter is part of human dignity", counsel submitted.

Justice Jayashree Agarwal, on the bench along Justice V. Ramana, said it was settled that a person cannot be dispossessed without following the due process of law. But the judge disagreed with the petitioner's contention that the government should not be without the other, the CJ said.

India's first branded train set to run as 'Sprite' Tejas Express

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

India's first "private, branded" train, launched by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) between Lucknow and Delhi, will run as the "Sprite" Tejas Express.

After IRCTC awarded advertisement rights through train branding of the Lucknow-Delhi Lucknow Tejas Express to M/s Sprite for a period of six months, the North Eastern Railway was told that Train Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) Lucknow-Delhi Lucknow Tejas Express should be announced as the "Sprite" Tejas Express, sources in the Railways said.

The advertisement through train branding was given by way of a Letter of Acceptance. The private train will be announced as "Sprite" Tejas Express at originating and en route stations on both sides of the journey, the sources told The Hindu on

Final drug test results for flight captain awaited: govt.

Associated Press
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Civil Aviation said on Wednesday that it was awaiting the drug test results for the captain of an Air India flight that dropped about 300 feet mid-air last week, injuring 24 passengers and crew members.

The incident on the Airbus A320 took place shortly after it took off on August 4 from Phuket, Thailand to New Delhi while carrying 137 passengers, including eight crew members. The aircraft later stabilised and landed safely.

The incident has come under intense scrutiny after some media reports, quoting unnamed sources, said that the captain may have tested positive for marijuana in a follow-up drug screening.

The Ministry said the captain's initial test result required further laboratory confirmation and that both pilots were removed from flying duties pending the inquiry. Details of the drug tests would be included in the inquiry report.

THE CROSSWORD 14871
(set by Arvind)

11 Across
1 Such a number is a contradiction — any way you look at it (5,3,2,4)
12 One lot rejected phrase (3)
13 Not to choose things that hard and make painful (9)
14 Not to surprise, not to be referred (7)
15 It's not run which is most unpredictable (7)

16 Down
16 Engage half heartedly to accommodate travel companions (9)
17 Confidence shown and all the latter (3)
18 Being such is best condition (6)
19 Fear of death before seen (3)
20 They wrote proclamations which empowered the east (6)
21 Engine about set in keep within the lines (6)
22 Being present of hand has perhaps finding a fraction of couple (4)
23 Outstanding protection for English disease (5)
24 Authority of the democratic party to go about making mistakes (7,3)
25 Turning star and confuse on how to ride a horse (6)
26 Twenty nine, least the stone (6)
27 Uniform face made frame made to protect against cold and noise (7)
28 Distinctly narrate that time in sugar (6)
29 Tight-fisted gentleman is wasting time (5)
30 To not a all, carrying one use safe and enclosed (3)
31 Jack embraces, he remains (3)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

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

FAITH
Sacred Srivilliputhur

Srivilliputhur is the pride of the South since Andal was born here on Aadi Poornam, elevating the Tamil star thiruvai. In Gods Story, Swami Vidaranya Desikan says a point of pride for Srivilliputhur is the fact that Sri Ranganatha's benign glance is always turned towards sacred Srivilliputhur where Andal became a great exponent of true bhakti, said Ramani Perundevi. Earth goddess was worried about the other mortals, especially in Kali Yuga. Personal asked Her to manifest on earth and guide devotees towards spiritual upliftment in a simple, easy-to-follow manner. He himself came down as Rama and Krishna at different yugas to guide the mankind. Bhoo Devi appeared as a baby in the Tulasi garden of Periyaswami in Srivilliputhur in the Tamil month of Aadi and was named Gods by her father.

There are nine types of bhakti and a devotee can follow any of them. However, what is pleasing to Paramai is saying His name alone. "Karanam paramai, Namaharanam paramai", says Aravali. Inspired by the discourse of her father from an early age, her life was all about Krishna. She wore the garland kept for the temple deity (Vasupatrasayee) and vowed to marry only Paramai. To that end, like the Gopikas, she not only observed the *navaratri* in the month of Margashirsha but also rendered the Thiruppavai, in loving her friends to her early, pray to Krishna and surrender in Him. Pleasant with her devotion, Paramai demanded Her to be offered the garland that she adorned herself with, before presenting it to the idol. She came to be known as Andal (one who rides over the Lord with her devotees). Her emphasis on the efficacy of chanting His name is the way for all devotees to attain Him.

India's first branded train set to run as 'Sprite' Tejas Express

S. Vijay Kumar

CHENNAI

India's first 'private, branded' train, launched by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) between Lucknow and Delhi, will run as the 'Sprite' Tejas Express.

After IRCTC awarded advertisement rights through train branding of the Lucknow-Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express to M/s Sprite for a period of six months, the North Eastern Railway was told that Train 82501/82502 Lucknow-Delhi-Lucknow IRCTC Tejas Express should be announced as the 'Sprite' Tejas Express, sources in the Railways said.

The advertisement through train branding was given by way of a Letter of Acceptance. The private train will be announced as 'Sprite' Tejas Express at originating and *en route* stations on both sides of the journey, the sources told *The Hindu* on

Wednesday. The country's first private train was flagged off by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on December 3, 2021.

The much publicised IRCTC's own fully air-conditioned superfast train is equipped with modern facilities. It has an extensive on-board food/beverage and infotainment services, the IRCTC said.

Group booking is allowed in the train where passengers travelling in groups to attend corporate meetings, marriages, social events, etc., could book an entire AC Chair Car coach having 78 seats.

"This is the first time that a train is being named after a brand. Though the Lucknow-Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express is a private train, IRCTC pays Indian Railways hauling charges, which includes the use of its infrastructure, such as tracks, railway stations, etc.," a senior Railways official said.

Point	Details
Train	Lucknow–Delhi–Lucknow Tejas Express
Train numbers	82501 / 82502
Operator	IRCTC
New branded name	“Sprite Tejas Express”
Brand	Sprite
Why the name changed	Advertisement/branding rights were awarded to Sprite
Branding period	6 months
Railway zone	North Eastern Railway (NER)
Significance	Described as India's first train to be named/branded after a commercial brand

Announcement	Train to be announced as “Sprite Tejas Express” at originating and en-route stations
Route	Lucknow ↔ New Delhi
Train type	Fully air-conditioned superfast train
Facilities	Food/beverages, infotainment and modern onboard facilities
Group booking	Entire AC Chair Car coach could be booked
Seats in group-booking coach	78 seats
Suitable for	Corporate meetings, marriages and social/group travel

Question

First Tejas Express route

Introduced

First IRCTC-operated Tejas

Started

Lucknow–Delhi train numbers

Operated by

IRCTC full form

IRCTC under

Commercially branded name in this article

Branding rights period

Why historically important

Answer

Mumbai CSMT – Karmali (Goa)

2017

Lucknow – New Delhi

2019

82501/82502

IRCTC

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation

Ministry of Railways

Sprite Tejas Express

6 months

First Indian train reported to be named after a commercial brand through train-branding rights

Text & Image

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Trained youth who secured placement under DDU-GKY

65 In per cent, the trainee youth of the DDU-GKY (DDU-GKY) has trained 18 lakh rural youth but placed 11.54 lakh, with the government acknowledging an overall placement rate of around 65% against the scheme's 70% target. The Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj has flagged the placement gap.

Percentage of retail inflation in India in July 2024

4.45 In per cent, India's retail inflation rose to 4.45% in July 2024, up from 4.38% in June, according to government data. The increase was largely driven by higher food prices, with food inflation rising to 5.52% in July from 5.32% in June. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation remains within the Reserve Bank of India's target of 4%.

No. of free-ranging dogs sterilised in areas of Ladakh since 2022

2,950 The Border Area Development Society (BADS), along with the Indian Army and government departments, has sterilised more than 2,950 free-ranging dogs in black-necked crane breeding areas of Ladakh since 2022. The dogs are usually nesting birds and prey on eggs and chicks, affecting breeding success.

No. of Anti-Human Trafficking Units set up across India

819 India has established 819 Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) across the country, according to the latest National Crime Records Bureau report. Since in India 2024, the Centre has advised States and Union Territories to strengthen inter-state coordination to tackle human trafficking, with platforms such as the Crime Multi-Agency Centre (Co-MAC).

Funds cleared by Maharashtra to set up wildlife infirmaries

39.69 In ₹ crore, the Maharashtra government on Wednesday approved ₹ 39.69 crore for establishing wildlife infirmaries. During 2024-25, with ₹ 19.84 crore allotted to purchase supplies and materials. Of the approved funds, ₹ 10.84 crore has been allocated for supplies and materials.

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How sustainable is India's E20 push?

In August, the government told the Lok Sabha that the ethanol blending programme had helped save around ₹2 lakh crore in foreign exchange. However, Opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal, have launched campaigns against E20, saying it harms vehicles and that the government is forcing it on people.

EXPLAINER

M. Kalyanaram

The story so far: Opposition leaders such as Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal have launched campaigns against E20 saying it harms vehicles and that the government is forcing it on people. Mr. Kejriwal alleged that India has "yielded" to pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump to buy ethanol from the United States.

What is the status of production? The government's target was to produce 10-12 billion litres of ethanol so that 20% of petrol used in transport vehicles could come from ethanol produced in India, with the money being funnelled into the Indian economy rather than becoming a foreign exchange outgo through crude oil imports. Taking advantage of the policy push, India's distillery capacity has ramped up and is now capable of producing some 16-20 billion litres from some 800 distilleries. For this ethanol year, which runs November to October, the oil companies have contracted to procure some 10.3 billion litres of ethanol.

Will it spur corn imports from U.S.? There is no evidence of a surge in ethanol or maize (corn) imports in Ministry of Commerce statistics. In any case, direct ethanol import for petroleum blending is banned, though the U.S. corn lobby has been pushing for India to increase corn imports. Government figures for the ethanol year show that 45% of the ethanol for petrol blending will come from maize, FCI stock some 25%, sugarcane juice 10%, B-heavy molasses some 10%, damaged kochigane around 4.5% and C-heavy molasses 1.5%. India's maize output grew by 4% in three years to 58 million tonnes in 2022-23, with more than 20% of it going into ethanol, says Shankar Laksh of Indian Council of Indian Research, adding that there is no need to import it.



Pollay push: A billboard promoting E20 fuel policy at a fuel station in New Delhi, India.

Sugarcane juice and B-heavy molasses go into sugar production and they are now being diverted to ethanol. The Indian Sugar Manufacturers' Association reported that the closing stock of sugar in September of 2023 was around 8 million tonnes, and this year too, the closing stock is expected to be 8 million tonnes. This indicates the diversion to ethanol has not affected sugar availability or stocks. Yet, in the event of a monsoon failure, crop losses and foodgrain shortages, the diversion of FCI rice, sugarcane juice and B-heavy molasses to ethanol production will come under stress, raising the possibility of corn imports.

Should we be worried about using E20 in our vehicles?

If you bought your vehicle after April 2023, you can fill your petrol tank with E20, shut it and forget it because that's where the Bharat Stage 6 Phase 2 (BS6-II) Driving Emission) mandate took effect. Vehicles built after this deadline were factory-engineered for E20 — with ethanol-resistant elastomers, fluorinated fuel lines, upgraded pump seals and recalibrated engine control units. These are roughly 70 million vehicles, about 20% of India's active petrol fleet, face little cause

for concern. The remaining 77% — nearly 240 million legacy two-wheelers and cars built for E5 or E10 — are the gasoline economy 20th and 21st century that degrades older rubber compounds and plastics, hardening and cracking fuel lines over time. It is also hygroscopic: it absorbs atmospheric moisture, and in vehicles left parked for extended periods, the ethanol-water mixture separates and settles, forming an acidic layer that corrodes tanks, damages fuel pumps and clogs filters with sludge. Consumer surveys by Lokacities found 60% of pre-2023 owners reporting mileage issues exceeding 10%, and 50% reporting increased maintenance.

IFT Kanpur's Engine Research Laboratory maintains that E20 causes no notable damage, with efficiency loss under 5% attributing most complaints to driving habits and traffic conditions. But independent mechanics and automotive communities dispute this, citing real-world fuel pump and injector failures traced to ethanol's solvent and low-lubricity properties. The government told Parliament in August that one leading pump dealer at a manufacturing had serviced 2.84 crore

vehicles in FY 2023-24, including about 1.8 crore legacy vehicles, without finding E20-related engine damage. Another two-wheeler maker reported similar findings. On mileage, it said government and manufacturer studies showed an efficiency penalty of about 2 to 6% in some vehicles designed for E10, though this too was influenced by driving habits and maintenance.

A transparent and more phased rollout such as in Brazil, where the transition to high levels of ethanol along with modifications to vehicles happened over several decades in a stable manner, would have taken the people into confidence. In India, the 10% milestone was reached in 2022. Within three years, the blending was ramped up to 20% with very little information and advisories coming from manufacturers.

Has ethanol blending helped mitigate oil supply crisis?

In August, the government said in Lok Sabha that so far, the ethanol blending programme has led to saving of around ₹2 lakh crore of foreign exchange and substituting of some 12 billion tonnes of crude oil imports. Substituting 10 billion litres of petrol with ethanol would mean displacing with a month of crude imports.

The government also told Parliament that while crude oil prices had gone up 70% during the war in West Asia, petrol prices at the pump had gone up by only 7 to 8% although under-recoveries had also increased. Within three years, the blending was ramped up to 20% with very little information and advisories coming from manufacturers. compared with a pump price of around ₹105 per litre of petrol. The base price of petrol, which includes the cost of production, transportation and OMC margins, is typically 85-90% of the petrol pump price. On the surface, it appears that ethanol is not as costly as petrol but the issue is complex. Ethanol and petrol follow different costing and tax regimes, and it would be difficult to make an independent inference on whether ethanol has helped keep prices down, as the government claims.

THE GIST

The government's target was to produce 10-12 billion litres of ethanol so that 20% of petrol used in transport vehicles could come from ethanol produced in India, with the money being funnelled into the Indian economy.

Vehicles built after April 2023 were factory-engineered for E20, with ethanol-resistant elastomers, fluorinated fuel lines, upgraded pump seals and recalibrated engine control units.

Supreme Court clarifies scope of police custody under BNSS

Court held that Section 167(2) of BNSS enlarges the window during which police custody may be sought

B.K. VU

The story so far:

The Supreme Court recently held in *The State of Andhra Pradesh vs. Suresh Kumar Varma* that Section 167(2) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Bill (BNSS), enlarges the window during which police custody may be sought by the investigating agency. The court held that the period of police custody under this order be extended.

Case under consideration by the SC: In a case of custodial death in which the dead body of the deceased had not remained untraced, the original hard disk of the CCTV system were yet to be

discovered, and discoveries under the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) were imminent, the judicial magistrate granted eight days of police custody, and allowed the accused to nominate two advocates of his choice to be present during custody. Out of the two advocates, one was allowed to be present at any convenient point of time during investigation. The order stated that "under no circumstances shall the period of police custody be extended under this order be extended".

While on appeal, the Andhra Pradesh High Court modified some conditions pertaining to the period of police custody and presence of an advocate throughout the probe. The State therefore challenged the above conditions in the Supreme Court on the premise that these directly impinged upon the rights of the accused to a fair trial as they constituted an unbridled investigation. The Supreme Court held that the

apprehensions expressed by the investigating agency were justified and the scheme under the BNSS which enlarges the window of police custody, must also be borne in mind. A magistrate or a court cannot place an absolute and non-extendable outer limit on custody, since such a complete bar would be contrary to the scheme of the BNSS. The Court therefore permitted 7 days of judicial custody as a default but the total period of police custody would not exceed 15 days.

Current law on police remand

Section 56 of the CrPc provides that any person arrested by the police without warrant cannot be detained for more than 24 hours, unless authorised by a magistrate under Section 167. Section 167(2) of the CrPc provides that in case it appears to the investigating officer that the probe cannot be

completed within 24 hours, and there are grounds for believing that the accusation is well founded, the magistrate may authorise the detention of the accused for a period not exceeding 15 days in the whole, or in parts, at any time during the initial 40 days or 60 days out of the detention period of 60 days or 90 days.

Section 167(3) provides that the magistrate may authorise the (judicial) detention of an accused person beyond the period of 15 days, if it is satisfied that adequate grounds exist for doing so, for a period exceeding - (i) 90 days, where the prosecution is in an offence punishable with death, imprisonment for life or imprisonment for a term of 10 years or (ii) 60 days, where the investigation relates to any other offence. The Court held that this legislative change was intended to meet situations where fresh facts, discoveries or leads may emerge during the period of investigation. Therefore, the window of police remand was enlarged beyond the initial 15 days, up to 40 days or 60 days of investigation.

Previously, Section 167 of the CrPc provided that the detention of an accused in police custody could not be granted beyond the initial 15 days in the whole.

However, during this first period of 15 days the magistrate could alter the nature of the custody from judicial custody to police custody and vice versa.

On the presence of an advocate: Section 18 of the BNSS provides that "when any person is arrested and interrogated by the police, he shall be entitled to meet an advocate of his choice during interrogation, though not throughout investigation".

The top court held that a plain reading of the provision makes it clear that it does not contemplate the continuous, ongoing physical presence of an advocate for the entirety of each interrogation session. The Court held that an unqualified entitlement to continuous presence, which would mean that the accused must be present throughout the entire period of investigation, is not contemplated. The Court therefore modified the condition imposed by the High Court, and held that such a lawyer shall only be allowed to remain present within the site of interrogation where he can see the respondent accused.

The Court also held that instead of uninterrupted videography of the transit of the accused between locations, the audio-visual recording of the actual interrogation, and of any proceedings of the accused, will satisfy the requirement. (B.K. VU is a former IPS officer.)

How sustainable is India's E20 push?

In August, the government told the Lok Sabha that the ethanol blending programme had helped save around ₹2 lakh crore in foreign exchange. However, Opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal, have launched campaigns against E20, saying it harms vehicles and that the government is forcing it on people

EXPLAINER

M. Kalyanaraman

The story so far:

Opposition leaders such as Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal have launched campaigns against E20 saying it harms vehicles and that the government is forcing it on people. Mr. Kejriwal alleged that India has "yielded" to pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump to buy ethanol from the United States.

What is the status of production?

The government's target was to produce 10-11 billion litres of ethanol so that 20% of petrol used in transport vehicles could come from ethanol produced in India, with the money being funnelled into the Indian economy rather than becoming a foreign exchange outgo through crude oil imports. Taking advantage of the policy push, India's distillery capacity has ramped up and is now capable of producing some 18-20 billion litres from some 500 distilleries. For this ethanol year, which runs November to October, the oil companies have contracted to procure some 10.5 billion litres of ethanol.

Will it spur corn imports from U.S.?

There is no evidence of a surge in ethanol or maize (corn) imports in Ministry of Commerce statistics. In any case, direct ethanol import for petroleum blending is banned, though the U.S. corn lobby has been pushing for India to increase corn imports. Government figures for this ethanol year show that 45% of the ethanol for petrol blending will come from maize, FCI rice some 22%, sugarcane juice 16%, B-heavy molasses some 10%, damaged foodgrains around 4.5% and C-heavy molasses 1.8%. India's maize output grew by 45% in three years to 55 million tonnes in 2025-26, with more than 20% of it going into ethanol, says Shankar Lal Jat of Indian Council of Maize Research, adding that there is no need to import it.



Policy push: A billboard promoting E20 fuel policy at a fuel station in New Delhi. AP

Sugarcane juice and B-heavy molasses go into sugar production and they are now being diverted to ethanol. The Indian Sugar Manufacturers' Association reported that the closing stock of sugar in September of 2025 was around 5 million tonnes, and this year too, the closing stock is expected to be 5 million tonnes. This indicates the diversion to ethanol has not affected sugar availability or stocks. Yet, in the event of a monsoon failure, crop losses and foodgrain shortages, the diversion of FCI rice, sugarcane juice and B-heavy molasses to ethanol production will come under stress, raising the possibility of corn imports.

Should we be worried about using E20 in our vehicles?

If you bought your vehicle after April 2023, you can fill your petrol tank with E20, shut it and forget it because that's when the Bharat Stage 6 Phase 2 (Real Driving Emissions) mandate took effect. Vehicles built after this deadline were factory-engineered for E20 – with ethanol-resistant elastomers, fluorinated fuel lines, upgraded pump seals and recalibrated engine control units. These roughly 70 million vehicles, about 23% of India's active petrol fleet, face little cause

for concern.

The remaining 77% – nearly 240 million legacy two-wheelers and cars built for E5 or E10 – are the genuine worry. Ethanol is a polar solvent that degrades older rubber compounds and plastics, hardening and cracking fuel hoses over time. It is also hygroscopic: it absorbs atmospheric moisture, and in vehicles left parked for extended periods, the ethanol-water mixture separates and settles, forming an acidic layer that corrodes tanks, damages fuel pumps and clogs filters with sludge. Consumer surveys by LocalCircles found 66% of pre-2023 owners reporting mileage losses exceeding 10%, and 55% reporting increased maintenance.

IIT Kanpur's Engine Research Laboratory maintains that E20 causes no notable damage, with efficiency loss under 5% – attributing most complaints to driving habits and traffic conditions. But independent mechanics and automotive communities dispute this, citing real-world fuel pump and injector failures traced to ethanol's solvent and low-lubricity properties.

The government told Parliament in August that one leading automobile manufacturer had serviced 2.84 crore

vehicles in FY 2025-26, including about 1.5 crore legacy vehicles, without finding E20-linked engine damage. Another two-wheeler maker reported similar findings. On mileage, it said government and manufacturer studies showed an efficiency penalty of about 2 to 6% in some vehicles designed for E10, though this too was influenced by driving conditions, habits and maintenance.

A transparent and more phased rollout such as in Brazil, where the transition to high levels of ethanol along with modifications to vehicles happened over several decades in a stable manner, would have taken the people into confidence. In India, the 10% milestone was reached in 2022. Within three years, the blending was ramped up to 20% with very little information and advisories coming from manufacturers.

Has ethanol blending helped mitigate oil supply crisis?

In August, the government said in Lok Sabha that so far, the ethanol blending programme has led to saving of around ₹2 lakh crore of foreign exchange and substituting of some 32 million tonnes of crude oil imports. Substituting 10 billion litres of petrol with ethanol would mean dispensing with a month of crude imports.

The government also told Parliament that while crude oil prices had gone up 70% during the war in West Asia, petrol prices at the pump had gone up by only 7 to 8% although under-recoveries had also increased. The OMCs procure ethanol at around ₹70 per litre for blending, compared with a pump price of around ₹105 per litre of petrol. The base price of petrol, which includes the cost of production, transportation and OMC margins, is typically 55-60% of the petrol pump price. On the surface, it appears that ethanol is not less costly than petrol but the issue is complex. Ethanol and petrol follow different costing and tax regimes, and it would be difficult to make an independent inference on whether ethanol has helped keep prices down, as the government claims.

THE GIST

The government's target was to produce 10-11 billion litres of ethanol so 20% of petrol used in transport vehicles could come from ethanol produced in India, with the money being funnelled into the Indian economy.

Vehicles built after this April 2023 were factory-engineered for E20, with ethanol-resistant elastomers, fluorinated fuel lines, upgraded pump seals and recalibrated engine control units.

How sustainable is India's E20 push?

In August, the government told Lok Sabha that the ethanol blending programme had helped save around **₹2 lakh crore** in foreign exchange. However, Opposition leaders have raised concerns that E20 harms vehicles and the government is forcing it on people.

WHAT IS E20?



E20 is petrol blended with **20%** ethanol and 80% petrol.

GOVERNMENT TARGET



To produce 10.1 billion litres of ethanol so 20% of petrol used in transport vehicles could come from ethanol.

STATUS OF PRODUCTION



10-11 billion litres of ethanol so far. 20% blending target not yet achieved.



GOVERNMENT CLAIMS (BENEFITS)

- Saved around ₹2 lakh crore in foreign exchange in August.
- Reduced oil imports by substituting some crude oil with ethanol.
- Helped mitigate oil supply crisis.
- Supports farmers (sugarcane juice, B-heavy molasses diverted to ethanol).
- Cuts carbon emissions and promotes cleaner fuel.

CONCERNS RAISED



Ethanol is a polar solvent that can degrade rubber compounds and plastics, causing hardening, cracking and fuel leaks over time.



May absorb moisture; in vehicles left parked for long, ethanol-water layer can cause corrosion and damage.



Consumer surveys report 66% pre-2023 owners reported mileage loss >10%, and 55% reported increased maintenance.



Independent mechanic & automotive communities cite real-world fuel pump and injector failures traced to ethanol's solvent & low-lubricity properties.



Automobile industry reports efficiency penalty of about 2–6% in some E10 vehicles.

OTHER KEY IMPACTS



Vehicles built after April 2023 are designed for E20.



Old vehicles may need elastomers, upgraded fuel lines & recalibrated engine control units.



OMCs procure ethanol at ~₹70 per litre; pump price of petrol includes production, transportation & OMC margins.

EXAM TIP



E20 ethanol blending is part of India's energy security, import reduction and climate goals, but concerns remain for older vehicles and long-term impact.



IN SHORT: E20 can save forex and reduce imports, support farmers and cut emissions, but needs careful rollout, vehicle readiness and monitoring to protect consumers and ensure sustainability.

N. Chandrasekaran's tenure as
Tata Sons chairman

THE NUMBER STORY: BIGGER AND BOLDER

Tata Group listed companies' financial performance

Market capitalisation of all listed entities combined

(₹ lakh crore)



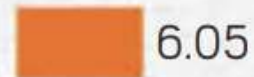
Feb 28, 2017

FY17

FY26

Consolidated revenues

(₹ lakh crore)



Net profit

(₹ crore)



Dividends paid out

(₹ crore)



No. of listed companies



Total employee strength

5,25,383



12,35,860

Tata Sons net debt

(₹ crore)

17,865

0

Tata Sons cash balances

(₹ crore)

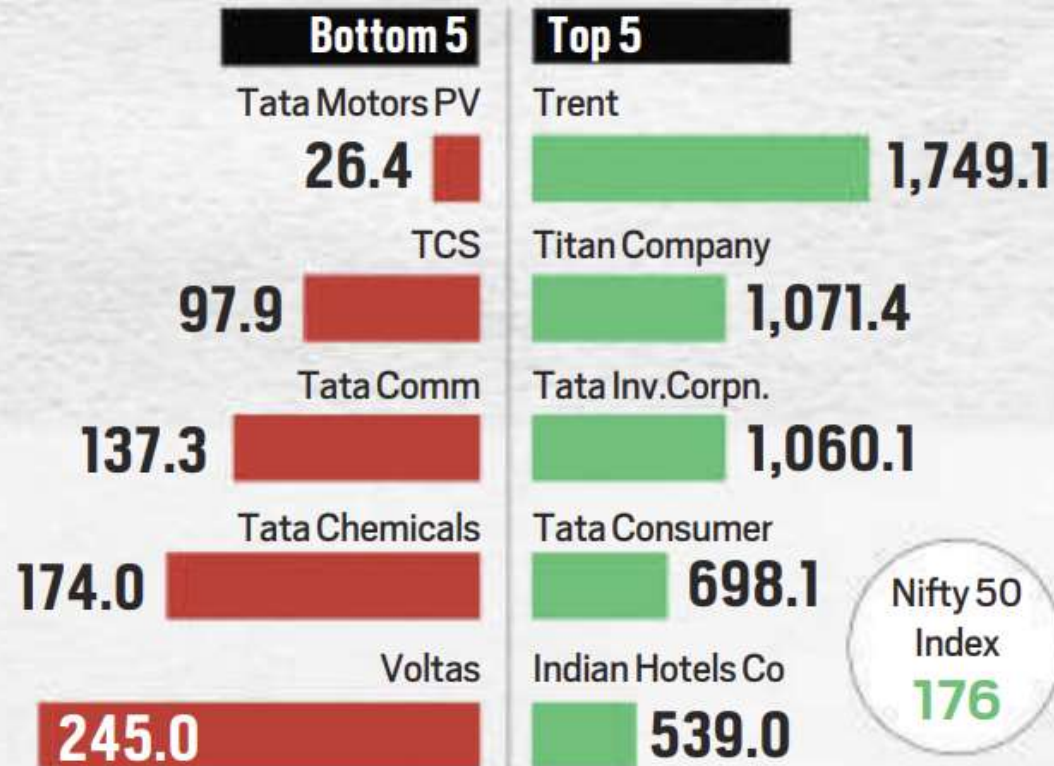
2,522

866



Value creators and value laggards

% return*



*Between February 28, 2017 and August 11, 2026; Companies with market cap of ₹10,000 crore and above considered

Source: Capitaline

Indicator	FY17 / Feb 2017	FY26 / Aug 2026	Change
Market capitalisation of listed Tata entities	₹8.53 lakh crore	₹27.48 lakh crore	~3.2x
Consolidated revenue	₹6.05 lakh crore	₹12.22 lakh crore	~2x
Net profit	₹40,186 crore	₹1,74,930 crore	~4.35x
Dividends paid	₹11,831 crore	₹51,972 crore	~4.4x
Listed companies	28	26	Slight decrease
Total employees	5,25,383	12,35,860	~2.35x
Tata Sons cash balance	₹2,522 crore	₹866 crore	Lower
Tata Sons net debt	₹17,865 crore	₹0	Debt eliminated

Future sector

Tata strategy

Semiconductors

Major manufacturing investment

Electronics

Electronics manufacturing expansion

Electric vehicles

Large EV ecosystem investments

Batteries

Battery manufacturing

Digital

Digital consumer ecosystem

AI

Artificial-intelligence partnerships/integration

Retail

Expansion through Trent and other businesses

Aviation

Air India transformation

New technology

Increasing share of capital allocation

Area

Market capitalisation

Revenue growth

Profit growth

Debt management

Traditional businesses

Retail

Hotels

Semiconductors

Electronics

EV

Digital commerce

BigBasket

Tata CLiQ

TCS

Succession

Assessment from article

● **Very strong**

● Strong

● **Exceptional**

● **Very strong**

● Strong

● **Major success**

● Strong

● Huge opportunity but execution risk

● Major future bet

● Major investment / competitive market

● Challenging

● Large losses

● Loss-making

● Profitable giant facing AI disruption

● Major unresolved strategic issue



Number What it represents

₹27.48 lakh crore Tata listed entities' combined market cap — Aug. 11, 2026

₹8.53 lakh crore Comparable market cap — Feb. 2017

₹12.22 lakh crore FY26 consolidated revenue

₹1.75 lakh crore approx. FY26 net profit

₹51,972 crore Dividends paid

12.36 lakh Employees

₹0 Tata Sons net debt shown in article

₹8.5 lakh crore Five-year investment commitment cited

₹1.14 lakh crore Dholera semiconductor fab investment cited

1,749.1% Trent return in article's comparison

1,071.4% Titan return

176% Nifty 50 benchmark return

₹4,974 crore BigBasket FY26 loss cited

₹1,611 crore Tata CLiQ loss cited

Russia began importing gasoline/petrol from India

Exam Point

Development

Why important?

Year

Main reason

Major cause of disruption

Indian refinery

Location

Operator

First highlighted cargo

Departure

Tanker

Intermediate point

Destination

Broader significance

Detail

Russia began importing gasoline/petrol from India

Reported as the **first such imports from India**

2026

Russian domestic refinery disruption and fuel shortages

Ukrainian attacks on Russian energy/refining infrastructure

Vadinar Refinery

Gujarat

Nayara Energy

~42,000 tonnes of gasoline

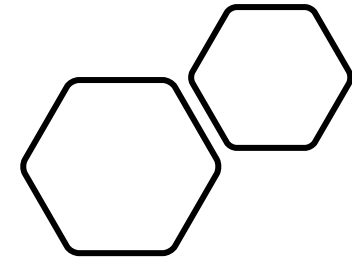
Around **18–20 June 2026**

Agni

Damietta, Egypt

Russia

India imports Russian crude, refines petroleum and is now supplying refined fuel back toward Russia



Indicator

June 2026

India's total crude imports

**~5.24 million
bpd**

Russian crude

**~2.64 million
bpd**

Approx. Russian share that
month

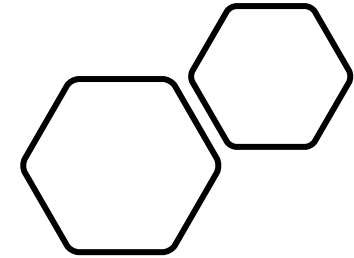
~50%

Russia's Apr–Jun quarter share

~41%

Middle East share during
quarter

~31%



Question

Answer

Which country began importing gasoline from India for the first time in 2026?

Russia

Why?

Domestic fuel shortages/refinery disruptions

Indian refinery involved in highlighted shipment

Vadinar Refinery

State

Gujarat

Company

Nayara Energy

Approx. cargo

42,000 tonnes

Transit/transfer location mentioned

Damietta, Egypt

India's major crude supplier in mid-2026

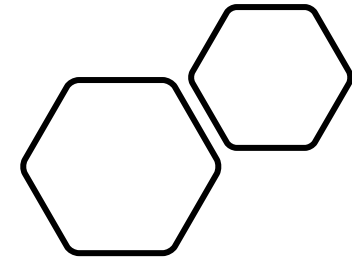
Russia

What does India import from Russia?

Primarily **crude oil**

What did Russia import from India?

Refined gasoline/petrol



World Elephant Day 2026

Point

World Elephant Day

Species important for India

IUCN status

India's share of world's wild Asian elephants

Elephant Reserves

Elephant corridors

Major Indian programme

Project Elephant launched

Nodal Ministry

Main issues

Ecological role

Fact

12 August every year

Asian Elephant — *Elephas maximus*

Endangered

Nearly/over 60%

33

150 identified corridors

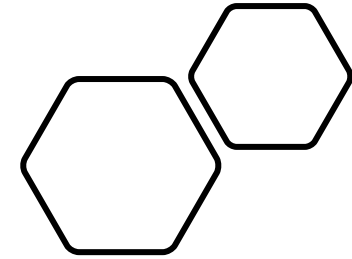
Project Elephant

1992

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC)

Habitat fragmentation, human-elephant conflict, poaching, illegal wildlife trade

Keystone/umbrella species and major seed disperser



Objective

Protect elephants

Protect habitat & corridors

Reduce human-elephant
conflict

Captive elephant welfare

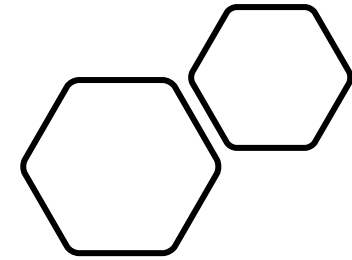
Meaning

Conservation of viable wild
elephant populations

Maintain movement between
fragmented forests

Reduce deaths, crop losses and
property damage

Improve management and welfare
of captive elephants



Elephant Reserve

Large conservation
landscape

Supports elephant
populations and habitats

India has **33**

Landscape-level
conservation

Can encompass different
land-use categories

Elephant Corridor

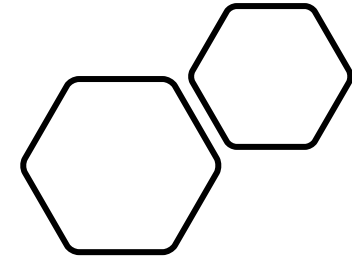
Relatively narrow movement
pathway

Connects larger habitat patches

150 identified corridors

Connectivity-level conservation

Particularly vulnerable to roads,
railways, settlements etc.



- **12 August → World Elephant Day → Asian Elephant → Endangered → Project Elephant 1992 → 33 Elephant Reserves → 150 corridors → India ≈60% of world's wild Asian elephants.**

Bashar al-Assad sentenced to
death in Syria



Point

Country

Former President

Decision

Date

Trial status

Court location

Brother

Other major defendant

Broad offences reported

Assad's location

Regime collapsed

Significance

Detail

Syria

Bashar al-Assad

Death sentence

11 August 2026

In absentia

Damascus

Maher al-Assad

Atef Najib

Premeditated murder, torture/crimes against
humanity and related offences

Russia

December 2024

Major step in Syria's post-Assad transitional-justice
process



Daraa protests (2011)



government crackdown



nationwide uprising



armed conflict



Syrian Civil War



Assad government survives for years with outside support



Assad regime collapses — December 2024



Assad goes to **Russia**



post-Assad investigations/trials



Death sentence — August 2026



Fact

Country

President

Father

Father's presidency

Political party

Capital

Major uprising began

Important starting location

Assad government collapsed

Where Assad subsequently went

Major international supporter during war

Another important supporter

Answer

Syria

2000–2024

Hafez al-Assad

1971–2000

Ba'ath Party

Damascus

2011

Daraa

8 December 2024

Russia

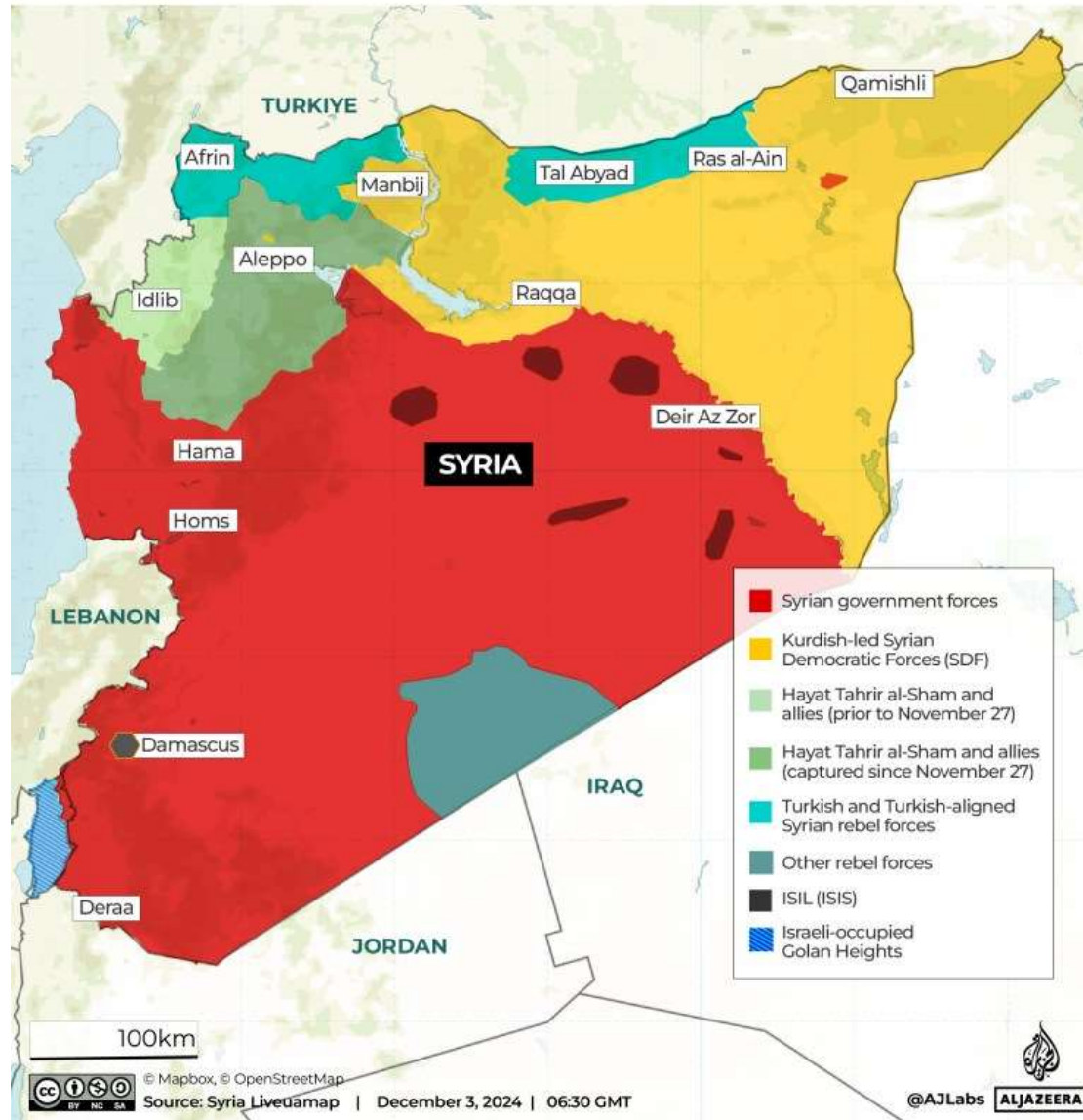
Russia

Iran



Who controls what in Syria?

Syrian and Russian jets have intensified air attacks in Idlib city and positions in Aleppo as the government of President Bashar al-Assad tries to slow the advance of opposition fighters who launched a surprise offensive last week.

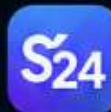


Topic
Official name
Region
Capital
Largest major city
Sea
Northern neighbour
Eastern neighbour
Southern neighbour
Western neighbours
Southwestern dispute
Important river
Other important river system
Major resources
Currency
Official language
Historically important capital
Present key leader
Former President

Exam fact
Syrian Arab Republic
West Asia / Middle East / Levant
Damascus
Aleppo
Mediterranean Sea
Türkiye
Iraq
Jordan
Lebanon + Mediterranean Sea
Golan Heights / Israel
Euphrates
Tigris touches/relates to Syria's far northeast
Petroleum, phosphates, natural
resources/minerals
Syrian pound
Arabic
Damascus is among the world's oldest
continuously inhabited cities
Ahmed al-Sharaa
Bashar al-Assad

1516–1918	Syria under Ottoman Empire
1916	Sykes–Picot Agreement between Britain & France shapes post-Ottoman spheres
1920	Syria comes under French Mandate
1946	French troops leave; modern Syria achieves full independence
1948	Syria participates in first Arab–Israeli War
1958	Syria + Egypt form United Arab Republic (UAR)
1961	Syria leaves UAR
1963	Ba'ath Party comes to power
1967	Israel captures Golan Heights during Six-Day War
1970	Hafez al-Assad seizes power through the Corrective Movement

1971	Hafez formally becomes President
1973	Syria and Egypt fight Israel in Yom Kippur/October War
1974	Israel–Syria disengagement agreement; UNDOF established
1982	Hama uprising crushed by Assad government
2000	Hafez dies; Bashar al-Assad becomes President
2011	Arab Spring protests → Syrian uprising/civil war
2014	ISIS controls significant territory in Syria/Iraq
2015	Russia intervenes militarily supporting Assad
2019	ISIS loses its last major territorial enclave in Syria
8 Dec 2024	Assad government collapses; Bashar flees to Russia
2025 onward	Post-Assad transitional government consolidates authority
2026	Transitional justice/prosecutions of Assad-era figures become major current-affairs issue



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Course Information

Instructor: Dilkhush Kumar

Start Date: 10 August, 2026

Duration: 45 days

Validity: 6 months

Course level:

Language:

Word of the day

Flagrant:

conspicuously and outrageously bad or reprehensible

Synonyms: egregious, glaring, gross

Usage: *The referee ignored a flagrant foul during the match.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/flagrant

International Phonetic Alphabet: /'fleɪ.ɡrənt/



Thank you 😊

