





3  
**The Hindu**



1  
**PIB, PRS & Other newspaper**



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**The Indian Express**

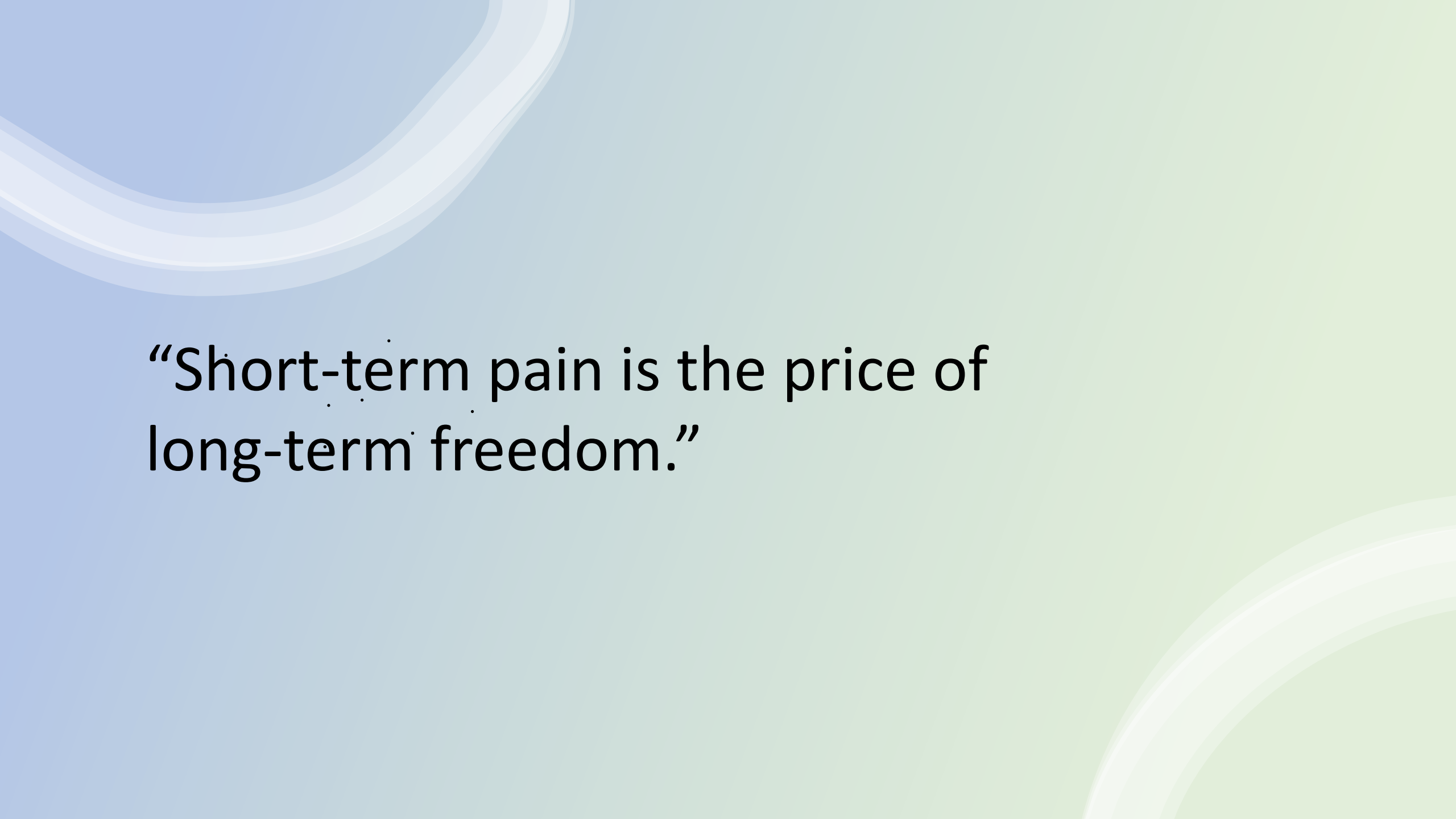


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**Jansatta**



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**Financial Express**





“Short-term pain is the price of long-term freedom.”

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# South's share of seats will not be cut, PM and Shah tell Lok Sabha

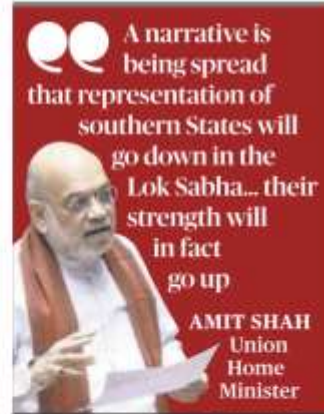
Home Minister slams those 'spreading misconceptions'; he says LS seats of South will rise from 129 to 195, and reassures TN. that its 'power is increasing'; Priyanka says if the Constitution Amendment Bill is passed, 'democracy will be finished'

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

**P**riime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday told the Lok Sabha that the Bills to amend the women's reservation law and carry out a fresh delimitation exercise will keep current proportional representation of southern States intact while increasing the absolute number of seats for each State approximately by 50%.

While the Prime Minister gave an assurance that the proportional distribution of seats among States will be maintained, it was the Home Minister who gave a detailed scenario for each southern State after the three Bills become law.

The debate followed the introduction of three Bills: the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, to enable implementation of the women's reservation by the 2029 Lok Sabha polls; the Delimitation Bill, 2026, to readjust parliamentary and Assembly constituencies through a Delimitation Commission;



and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, to extend the reservation to the legislatures of Delhi, Puducherry, and Jammu & Kashmir.

Mr. Shah said that as the Minister piloting the Bill, he was placing this interpretation before the House officially. "I understand my responsibility. Those who are spreading misconceptions perhaps do not understand," he said.

#### Shah's illustration

The Minister showed how the representation of the southern States would not go down. The Lok Sabha will have 816 seats after de-

## Proposed figures

The table shows the estimated number of seats for southern States as announced by Union Home Minister Amit Shah

State	Current seats	As a share of current 543 seats	50% increase (approx.)	New status (as a share of 816 seats)
Karnataka	28	5.15%	42	5.14%
Andhra Pradesh	25	4.60%	38	4.65%
Telangana	17	3.13%	26	3.18%
Tamil Nadu	39	7.18%	59	7.23%
Kerala	20	3.68%	30	3.67%
Total	129	23.76%	195	23.87%

limitation. He said that in a House of existing 543 members, Karnataka has 28 seats, or 5.15% of MPs. After the Bill is passed, Karnataka's share will become 42, and its percentage of seats in a Lok Sabha of 816 members will be 5.14%. Andhra Pradesh, with its 25 seats (4.60%), will have 38 MPs (4.65%). Likewise, Telangana's 17 seats (3.13%) will become 26 (3.18%), Kerala's 20 seats (3.68%) will touch 30 (3.67%), and Tamil Nadu's 39 seats (7.18%) will become 59 (7.23%). Mr. Shah said many MPs from Tamil Nadu have come wearing black clothes, but he reassured

the people of the State that "your power is not decreasing, it is increasing."

He said the number of Lok Sabha seats in the five southern States will go up from the existing 129 to 195, with the percentage share increasing from 23.76% to 23.87%.

Participating in the debate, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra slammed the delimitation and said that "if the Constitution Amendment Bill is passed in Parliament, democracy will be finished in India."

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, while expressing support for wo-

men's reservation law, said it should be implemented only after the ongoing Census is complete.

The Home Minister said he would give his detailed reply in the Lok Sabha on Friday.

"I will explain, provided they sit to listen and do not walk out. I will explain it with such simplicity that even a child in KG (kindergarten) would understand," Mr. Shah said. The government will need the support from parties outside the National Democratic Alliance to pass the Constitution Amendment Bill since it requires two-thirds majority. In the current Lok Sabha strength of 540 members, the government needs the support of 360 members but is falling short by over 60 MPs.

Responding to Ms. Vadra's accusation that the government will put its own people in the Delimitation Commission, he said: "We have not made any changes to the Delimitation Commission Act. We have repeated your Delimitation Commission Act down to the full stops and commas."

<b>Delimitation / परिसीमन</b>	Redrawing of electoral constituency boundaries based on Census data / जनगणना के आधार पर निर्वाचन क्षेत्र सीमाओं का पुनर्निर्धारण
<b>Constitution Amendment Bill / संविधान संशोधन विधेयक</b>	Bill to change provisions of the Constitution; requires special majority / संविधान के प्रावधानों को बदलने वाला विधेयक; विशेष बहुमत आवश्यक
<b>Two-thirds Majority / दो-तिहाई बहुमत</b>	2/3rd of members present and voting in Parliament / संसद में उपस्थित और मतदान करने वाले सदस्यों का 2/3
<b>Proportional Representation / अनुपातिक प्रतिनिधित्व</b>	Each state's seat share proportional to its population / प्रत्येक राज्य की सीटें जनसंख्या के अनुपात में
<b>Women's Reservation Act 2023 / महिला आरक्षण अधिनियम 2023</b>	Reserves 1/3rd Lok Sabha and assembly seats for women (106th Amendment) / लोकसभा और विधानसभा में महिलाओं के लिए 1/3 सीटें आरक्षित (106वाँ संशोधन)
<b>Delimitation Commission / परिसीमन आयोग</b>	Statutory body that redraws constituency boundaries / वह सांविधिक निकाय जो निर्वाचन क्षेत्र सीमाएं पुनर्निर्धारित करता है
<b>NDA / राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन</b>	BJP-led ruling coalition at the Centre / भाजपा नेतृत्व वाला सत्तारूढ़ केंद्रीय गठबंधन
<b>Federal Tension / संघीय तनाव</b>	Conflict between central authority and state interests in a federal system / संघीय व्यवस्था में केंद्रीय अधिकार और राज्य हितों का टकराव
<b>Article 82 / अनुच्छेद 82</b>	Mandates readjustment of Lok Sabha seats after each Census / प्रत्येक जनगणना के बाद लोकसभा सीटों के पुनर्समायोजन का आदेश
<b>131st Amendment Bill / 131वाँ संशोधन विधेयक</b>	Constitution Amendment Bill proposed in 2026 for women's reservation implementation / महिला आरक्षण लागू करने के लिए 2026 में प्रस्तावित संविधान संशोधन विधेयक

# Eight pilgrims killed, 12 injured as pick-up vehicle, tanker collide in A.P.

A group of 20 people from Chikkamangalur were on their way to Raghavendra Swamy Math when the accident occurred; the driver dozed off and the vehicle then collided with the tanker on the other side, police say; PM and CM express grief

### Hareesh P. SURVEILLANCE

**E**ight persons were killed and 12 injured when a pick-up vehicle collided with a tanker on Thursday at Chitlakalaka, near Manturam, in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh on Thursday morning. Superintendent of Police Vikrant Patil said 20 persons from Chikkamangalur in Karnataka were on their way to Sri Raghavendra Swamy Math at Manturam when their vehicle met with the accident.

The group of devotees hired the vehicle for Manturam and started journey around 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday. The accident took place around 3:30 a.m. on Thursday, the SP said, while quoting the survivors.



Four passengers died on the spot, while others succumbed to injuries while undergoing treatment. (SP/CAJ. ANANTHAKRISHN)

# Congress hit by fresh leadership dispute in Kerala

### The Hindu Bureau THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Discussions over leadership continues to dog the Congress in Kerala ahead of the announcement of the 2026 Assembly election results in May. Former Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (PPCC) chief K. Venugopal, MP, appeared to reopen the leadership dispute in the post-poll period by advocating for the "merger" of all India Congress Committee general secretary K.C. Venugopal,

MP, in State politics. Mr. Sudhakaran's contentious Facebook post on Wednesday also appeared to have opened the door for friction. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CP(M)) secretary in Kerala politics, Mr. Venugopal, said the "post-election surge in infighting" in the Congress betrayed an "angry" for personal power over clear governance or political goals. Left supporters also criticised the "merger" as "feeding" in the Congress over the leadership question as a move aimed at

resting "factional loyalties and fishing out potential rivals". Mr. Sudhakaran stated that the Assembly election campaign had underscored the "multipersonality" of Mr. Venugopal's presence in Kerala politics. In a rather offbeat post, Mr. Sudhakaran waxed eloquently about how Mr. Venugopal had proved his "leadership and organisational mettle by steering Congress workers" into political action, including United Democratic Front candidates with confidence, and manifesting as

a "driving force" behind the party's "electoral victory". He argued that Kerala needed a "far-sighted" leader of the likes of K. Karunakaran or Gopinath Chandiy, A.K. Antony and Vajpayee, stating that Mr. Venugopal "could make the cut". He termed Mr. Venugopal the "uncrowned king" of the Congress in Kerala and stated that he had been "elected in the crucible of grassroots-level political activity, including organisational politics".

Notably, Mr. Venugopal did not disavow Mr. Sudhakaran's statement, speaking to reporters in Delhi. Mr. Venugopal said that he had been "elected" to a "far-sighted" leader of the likes of K. Karunakaran or Gopinath Chandiy, A.K. Antony and Vajpayee, stating that Mr. Venugopal "could make the cut". He termed Mr. Venugopal the "uncrowned king" of the Congress in Kerala and stated that he had been "elected in the crucible of grassroots-level political activity, including organisational politics".

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu asked the officials to ensure the best possible medical treatment for the injured. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced an ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased and ₹50,000 to the injured. Union Minister National Relief Fund (PMNRF).

### deaf," he said. Collector A. Sree said two passengers sustained head injuries and are critical. The condition of the remaining four undergoing treatment is stable. The eight bodies have been sent for post-mortem. She said the bodies would be sent to Chikkamangalur.



Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu asked the officials to ensure the best possible medical treatment for the injured.

Another injured passenger told prosecutors that he was sleeping and did not know what exactly happened. "By the time I woke up, I was at a job, I found at least four of our group members

### deaf," he said. Collector A. Sree said two passengers sustained head injuries and are critical. The condition of the remaining four undergoing treatment is stable. The eight bodies have been sent for post-mortem. She said the bodies would be sent to Chikkamangalur.

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Nishant Kumar with JDU State president Umesh Singh Khatwaha and Chief who in the Legislative Council Sanjay Kumar Singh at the party office on Thursday. (SP/CAJ. ANANTHAKRISHN)

# Nishant not to be part of Bihar Cabinet; to work for the party

### Anshu Bhakti PATNA

It was former Chief Minister Nishant Kumar's decision not to allow his son, Nishant Kumar, to become the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar or get any Ministerial post, several Janata Dal (United) leaders close to the party chief told *The Hindu*.

They said Mr. Nitish Kumar was apprehensive that shuffling his son would have unnecessarily sparked a debate and given Opposition parties an opportunity to allege that he was promoting dynastic politics, something he has always opposed.

Naraena said the 48-year-old action has been given the task to make the JD(U) strong at the grassroots level, and he will soon launch a statewide journey meeting people and party workers.

Mr. Nishant will also not be a part of the Cabinet when the expansion takes place next week. His complete focus would be on the party.

"Nishant is now a mem-

# BJP MP's remarks in Parliament on division of A.P. draw ire

### R. Ravikanth Reddy HYDRABAD

Strong political reactions erupted in Telangana following controversial remarks made by BJP MP Tejaveer Suryu in Parliament on Thursday. Mr. Suryu said the process of division of Andhra Pradesh and formation of Telangana was worse than the way the British partitioned India and Pakistan.

The comments triggered criticism from leaders across party lines, with Telangana Minister Ponumalla Prabhakar and Bharat A. Ramiah (BJP) working president K. T. Ramaiah asking the MP to tender a public apology.

"Telangana was not born out of violence but through a democratic and constitutional process. Comparing such a sacred movement with the country's partition is deeply insulting," he said.

He demanded immediate corrective action, including expurgating the remarks from Lok Sabha records, a public apology from the MP, and treating the issue as a violation of parliamentary norms.

BJP working president K. T. Ramaiah has targeted the BJP, accusing it of harbouring deep-seated hostility towards Telangana. He described the comparison as "foolish and arrogant". Congress MP Chaudhary K. Reddy termed the comments a reflection of BJP's stand on Telangana.

### IN BRIEF

#### A.P. plans to use robots, drones for firefighting

The Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Response and Fire Services Department plans to introduce robots and drones for firefighting in hazardous conditions. The decision has been taken to improve safety for firefighters during accidents and to control fires. The department will have a payload capacity of 20 kg. "We are planning to introduce a robot and four drones, especially where there is no possibility for firefighters to enter, such as high-rise buildings or cases of toxic leaks," Fire Services in-charge Director General P. Venkata Ramana said.

#### PG medical student found dead in hostel in Hyderabad

A 26-year-old postgraduate medical student was found dead in his hostel room at Osmania General Hospital, Hyderabad, on Thursday. The deceased, K. Suresh, a first-year MB General Surgery student, had joined the Department of General Surgery at Osmania General Hospital three months ago after completing his MBBS from SVKM's Medical College in Maharashtra. Suresh is suspected to have committed an overdose of pills. The police are investigating the case. (These in districts, contact TheMANSAB 1414 to seek help.)

#### Kannur Dental College terminates HoD from service

The management of Kannur Dental College, Anjalakshy, has terminated the Head of the Department (HoD) of Dental Anatomy M.K. Ram from service, who had been in charge of the death of first-year Bachelor of Dental Surgery student B. L. Nithin Raj. The decision was taken on Thursday following the investigation conducted by college Principal with student union representatives and parents. The termination order noted that the action was based on complaints from students regarding his conduct.

### Scorching toll



A worker dies paddy under the harsh sun at a stockyard in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, on Thursday. The State has been experiencing intense heat over the past few days, with Palakkad district recording temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius. (S. K. MURTHY)

# Bhutan Customs team to arrive in Munnar

### The Hindu Bureau KOCHI

Operation Numbur, a nationwide crackdown on the large-scale smuggling of premium second-hand vehicles through Bhutan and forged registration rackets involving Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) officials, is likely to figure prominently in the India-Bhutan Joint Customs Group meeting scheduled to be held in Munnar, Kerala, next week. A Bhutanese delegation will be in Munnar from April 20 to 23. The Joint Customs Group meeting is expected to take place on April 20 and 21. The Customs (Preventive) Commissionerate, Ko-

chi, launched Operation Numbur with State-wide raids on September 25, 2023, including marauds at the residence of popular film actor such as Biplob Saiman and Priyviraj. On the first day alone, 39 vehicles were seized and in the days since, another 15 vehicles, including four last week, were confiscated. The issue also featured in Home Secretary meeting scheduled to be held in Munnar, Kerala, next week. Operation Numbur has emerged as one of the most extensive crackdowns on vehicle smuggling and forged registrations, prompting the Bhutanese Department to initiate investigations.

# FIFA surprises Keralites on Vishu with AI-generated image of Messi

### Thiruvananthapuram NEWS/ANANTHAKRISHN

Vishu appeared to have gone global on Wednesday. The residence of popular film actor such as Biplob Saiman and Priyviraj. On the first day alone, 39 vehicles were seized and in the days since, another 15 vehicles, including four last week, were confiscated. The issue also featured in Home Secretary meeting scheduled to be held in Munnar, Kerala, next week. Operation Numbur has emerged as one of the most extensive crackdowns on vehicle smuggling and forged registrations, prompting the Bhutanese Department to initiate investigations.



The page also showcased Vishu Greetings in Malayalam, 'Vishu Achhamam' and Vishu Greetings in English. (S. K. MURTHY)

Notably, the AI image has a backstory. The State government had announced that Argentina, Messi's home team, would play a friendly international match to regale fans in Kochi in 2025. Kerala's Sports Minister, V. Abdulrahman, visited Spain last September and met with Argentina Football Association officials to discuss the details. A media house in the State. Broken ties However, the Kerala government's relationship with AFC, severed in April 2022. The post also saw light on man stating that the Argen-

# Kerala botanist wins WWF award for app

### The Hindu Bureau MALAPPURAM

A botany researcher who developed an AI-powered mobile application to identify invasive plant species in Kerala has been awarded the WWF (World Wildlife Fund for Nature) National Award.

N. Alim Yusuf, a researcher at the Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute for Plant Sciences (MBGIPS), Obavanna, Kozhikode, received the honour for his innovative application capable of identifying nearly 100 invasive plant species recorded in Kerala.

He was presented the award at the National ECHO Youth Innovation Summit 2026, held as part of the International Youth Biodiversity Conference in Telangana. As part of the recognition, he will also receive a seed grant of ₹1.5 lakh from the WWF to further develop and scale his project. The application, developed by him, was earlier launched at the Kerala Science Congress held in Kochi in February this year.

Powered by the advanced machine learning model YOLOv7, the app allows users to identify whether a plant is invasive simply by capturing its image.

Available in both Malayalam and English, it also integrates geospatial tracking to map the spread of invasive species, offering valuable data for researchers and the Forest department.

Football fans in Kerala had expressed their profound disappointment on social media. Kerala's football fan base is deeply divided between Argentine and Brazil fan loyalists. Colourful cardboard cutouts of Argentine and Brazilian footballing icons herald World Cup rosters in the State.

The comment section on the FIFA World Cup page also saw light on man stating that the Argen-

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## **The Hindu Bureau**

MALAPPURAM

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- Kerala botanist **N. Alim Yusuf** won the **WWF National Award** for developing an AI app to identify invasive plant species.
- केरल के वनस्पतिशास्त्री **एन. आलिम यूसुफ** को आक्रामक पादप प्रजातियों की पहचान करने वाले AI ऐप के लिए **WWF राष्ट्रीय पुरस्कार** मिला।
- The app **Neophyte ID** can identify nearly **100 invasive plant species** recorded in Kerala using AI and machine learning.
- ऐप **नियोफाइट ID** AI और मशीन लर्निंग का उपयोग करके केरल में दर्ज लगभग **100 आक्रामक पादप प्रजातियों** की पहचान कर सकता है।
- Award presented at **National ECHO Youth Innovation Summit 2026**, held at the **International Youth Biodiversity Conference in Telangana**.
- पुरस्कार **राष्ट्रीय ECHO युवा नवाचार शिखर सम्मेलन 2026** में प्रदान किया गया, जो **तेलंगाना में अंतर्राष्ट्रीय युवा जैव विविधता सम्मेलन** के दौरान आयोजित था।
- The app uses **YOLOv11**, an advanced machine learning model, for real-time image-based plant identification.
- ऐप वास्तविक समय छवि-आधारित पहचान के लिए उन्नत ML मॉडल **YOLOv11** का उपयोग करता है।
- App also integrates **geospatial tracking** to map spread of invasive species — useful for Forest Department and researchers.
- ऐप में **जियोस्पेशियल ट्रैकिंग** भी है जो वन विभाग और शोधकर्ताओं के लिए आक्रामक प्रजातियों के प्रसार को मैप करती है।

- **Invasive plant species** are plants that are not originally from a region but have spread there and cause harm to the local ecosystem, biodiversity, and agriculture.
- **आक्रामक पादप प्रजातियाँ** वे पौधे हैं जो किसी क्षेत्र के मूल निवासी नहीं हैं लेकिन वहाँ फैल गए हैं और स्थानीय पारिस्थितिकी, जैव विविधता और कृषि को नुकसान पहुँचाते हैं।
- Identifying these species early is very important to control their spread — but it is difficult without expert knowledge.
- इन प्रजातियों की शीघ्र पहचान उनके प्रसार को नियंत्रित करने के लिए बहुत जरूरी है — लेकिन विशेषज्ञ ज्ञान के बिना यह कठिन है।
- **Neophyte ID** solves this by letting any user simply **photograph a plant** and the AI identifies whether it is invasive — no botanical expertise needed.
- **नियोफाइट ID** इसे सरल बनाता है — कोई भी उपयोगकर्ता पौधे की **फोटो खींचे** और AI बताए कि वह आक्रामक है या नहीं — वनस्पति विज्ञान की विशेषज्ञता जरूरी नहीं।
- The app also maps **where** invasive species are spreading using GPS data, helping authorities plan control measures.
- ऐप GPS डेटा से यह भी मैप करता है कि आक्रामक प्रजातियाँ **कहाँ** फैल रही हैं, जिससे अधिकारियों को नियंत्रण उपाय योजना बनाने में मदद मिलती है।
- It is available in **Malayalam and English** — making it accessible to local communities in Kerala.
- यह **मलयालम और अंग्रेजी** में उपलब्ध है — केरल की स्थानीय समुदायों के लिए सुलभ।

- Invasive species are one of the **top five drivers of global biodiversity loss** according to IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services).
- IPBES के अनुसार आक्रामक प्रजातियाँ वैश्विक जैव विविधता हानि के शीर्ष पाँच कारणों में से एक हैं।
- India is a signatory to the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** which mandates control of invasive species.
- भारत जैविक विविधता पर अभिसमय (CBD) का हस्ताक्षरकर्ता है जो आक्रामक प्रजातियों के नियंत्रण का आदेश देता है।
- The **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022)** set targets including **Target 6** specifically on invasive alien species.
- कुनमिंग-मॉन्ट्रियल वैश्विक जैव विविधता ढाँचा (2022) में लक्ष्य 6 विशेष रूप से आक्रामक विदेशी प्रजातियों पर है।



*Ageratina adenophora* (Spreng.) King & H. Rob.



*Ageratum conyzoides* L.



*Ageratum houstonianum* Mill.



*Bidens pilosa* L.



*Chromolaena odorata* (L.) R.M. King & H. Rob.



*Lantana camara* L.



*Mikania micrantha* Kunth



*Tithonia diversifolia* (Hemsl.) A. Gray



*Parthenium hysterophorus* L.

**MIKANIA MICRANTHA** (bittervine)

One of the most invaded plant in the Pacific and Asian countries, it was introduced in India around World War-II

Manas and Kaziranga (Assam) national parks, Valmiki Tiger Reserve (Bihar) and Kerala. Early-stage invasion Central India and Himalayan foothills



**MIMOSA DIPLORICHA**

(giant sensitive plant)

Native to Central and South America, it can form dense thickets quickly

Manas and Kaziranga (Assam) national parks, Valmiki Tiger Reserve (Bihar), Karnataka. Early-stage invasion in Central India



**XANTHIUM STRUMARIUM**

(common cocklebur)

Native of North America and Argentina, the plant is drought-resistant

Mukundara National Park (Rajasthan), Nagarjun Sagar Srisailem (Andhra Pradesh) and Sathya-mangalam (Tamil Nadu) tiger reserves



**MESOPHAERUM SUAVEOLENS**

(pignut)

A herbaceous plant native to the South America and West Indies, its introduction into India is unknown

Pench, Melghat and Tadoba Andhari tiger reserves in Central India. Early-stage invasion in Himalayan foothills



**CHROMOLAENA ODORATA** (siam weed)

Belonging to the sunflower family, this South American shrub was introduced in India in the 1840s

Bandipur National Park and Nagarhole Tiger Reserve in Karnataka, Manas National Park (Assam), Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu). Early-stage invasion in Himalayan foothills, Central Indian highlands

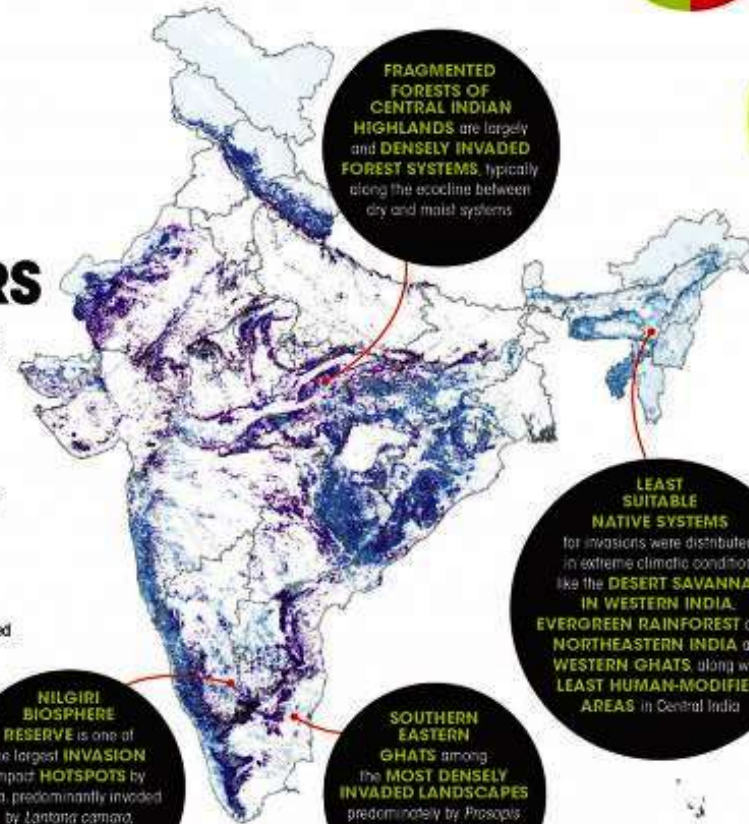


# SILENT INVADERS

The 11 high-concern invasive species have already attacked 66 per cent of India's natural systems. They are most prolific in fragmented and deciduous ecosystems and are least prevalent in areas with extreme climate and less anthropic pressure



% share of natural areas invaded

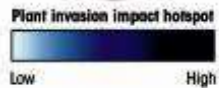


**FRAGMENTED FORESTS OF CENTRAL INDIAN HIGHLANDS** are largely and **DENSELY INVADED FOREST SYSTEMS**, typically along the ecotone between dry and moist systems

**NILGIRI BIOSPHERE RESERVE** is one of the largest **INVASION** impact **HOTSPOTS** by area, predominantly invaded by *Lantana camara*, *Prosopis juliflora* and *Chromolaena odorata*

**SOUTHERN EASTERN GHATS** among the **MOST DENSELY INVADED LANDSCAPES** predominantly by *Prosopis juliflora* and *Lantana camara*

**LEAST SUITABLE NATIVE SYSTEMS** for invasions were distributed in extreme climatic condition like the **DESERT SAVANNAS** IN WESTERN INDIA, **EVERGREEN RAINFOREST** of the **NORTHEASTERN INDIA** and **WESTERN GHATS** along with **LEAST HUMAN-MODIFIED AREAS** in Central India



Source: "Distribution, drivers and restoration priorities of plant invasions in India", published in *Journal of Applied Ecology* on August 16, 2023



**LANTANA CAMARA** (lantana)

Native of South America, it was introduced in India as a decorative shrub in 1809

Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala), Central Indian Highlands, Himalayan foothills



**SENNA TORA** (sickle senna)

An invasive weed native of South America, its introduction into India is unknown

Sariska (Rajasthan) and Amarabad (Telangana) tiger reserves and Bandhavgarh National Park (Madhya Pradesh)



**PROSOPIS JULIFLORA**

(mesquite)

Native to Mexico and South America, it was introduced in India in 1887

Kutch, Thar, Aravalli, and Deccan Plateau. Early-stage invasion in lower Himalayas, Northeastern hills



**AGERATINA ADENOPHORA**

(catweed)

A weed indigenous to Central America, it was introduced in the subcontinent in 1950s

Himalayas, Western Ghats and Northeast. Early-stage invasion in dry forests of Central India



**AGERATUM CONYZOIDES**

(goat weed)

A flower bearing plant native to tropical America and known to exist in India before 1882

Himalayan foothills, Terai and Northeastern hills



**PARTHENIUM HYSTEROPHORUS**

(congress grass)

A poisonous weed introduced in India in 1954 as contaminants in imported wheat

Agro-pastoral regions, along with riverbanks, roadsides, animal trails



- Invasive species like **Lantana camara**, **Mikania micrantha**, **Water Hyacinth** have been harming India's ecosystems for decades.


- **लैंटाना कैमारा, मिकानिया माइक्रांथा, जलकंभी** जैसी आक्रामक प्रजातियाँ दशकों से भारत के पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को नुकसान पहुँचा रही हैं।

- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** adopted at **Rio Earth Summit 1992** — India ratified it in 1994.

- **जैविक विविधता पर अभिसमय (CBD) रियो पृथ्वी शिखर सम्मेलन 1992** में अपनाया गया — भारत ने 1994 में इसकी पुष्टि की।

- **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** enacted in India to implement CBD obligations.

- CBD दायित्वों को लागू करने के लिए भारत में **जैविक विविधता अधिनियम, 2002** बनाया गया।



- **Major Invasive Species in India / भारत में प्रमुख आक्रामक प्रजातियाँ:**
  - *Lantana camara* — invades forests, toxic to livestock / वनों पर आक्रमण, पशुओं के लिए विषाक्त
  - *Eichhornia crassipes* (Water Hyacinth / जलकुंभी) — chokes water bodies / जल निकायों को अवरुद्ध करती है
  - *Mikania micrantha* (Mile-a-minute weed) — smothers native vegetation / मूल वनस्पति को दबाती है
  - *Prosopis juliflora* (Vilayati Babool) — invades grasslands / घास के मैदानों पर आक्रमण
- **Biodiversity Hotspots in India / भारत में जैव विविधता हॉटस्पॉट:**
  - Western Ghats / पश्चिमी घाट
  - Eastern Himalayas / पूर्वी हिमालय
  - Indo-Burma region / इंडो-बर्मा क्षेत्र:त्र
  - Sundaland (Andaman & Nicobar) / सुंडालैंड (अंडमान और निकोबार)
- **Key Organisations / मुख्य संगठन:**
  - **WWF:** World Wide Fund for Nature; HQ Gland, Switzerland; founded 1961
  - **IUCN:** International Union for Conservation of Nature; maintains Red List; HQ Gland, Switzerland
  - **IPBES:** Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; "IPCC of biodiversity"
  - **CBD Secretariat:** Montreal, Canada
- **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022) Key Targets:**
  - **30x30 Target:** Protect 30% of land and ocean by 2030
  - **Target 6:** Reduce invasive alien species introduction by 50% by 2030
  - **Target 2:** Restore 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030

• Consider the following statements about the Neophyte ID app and related concepts: नियोफाइट ID ऐप और संबंधित अवधारणाओं के बारे में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार करें:

• Neophyte ID was developed by a researcher at the Malabar Botanical Garden and Institute for Plant Sciences, Kozhikode. नियोफाइट ID को कोझिकोड के मालाबार बॉटनिकल गार्डन और इंस्टीट्यूट फॉर प्लांट साइंसेज के एक शोधकर्ता ने विकसित किया।

• The app uses the YOLOv11 machine learning model and can identify nearly 100 invasive plant species recorded in Kerala. ऐप YOLOv11 ML मॉडल का उपयोग करता है और केरल में दर्ज लगभग 100 आक्रामक पादप प्रजातियों की पहचान कर सकता है।

• The WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) is a United Nations body headquartered in Geneva. WWF (वर्ल्ड वाइड फंड फॉर नेचर) जिनेवा स्थित एक संयुक्त राष्ट्र निकाय है।

• The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 established the National Biodiversity Authority with its headquarters in Chennai. जैविक विविधता अधिनियम, 2002 ने राष्ट्रीय जैव विविधता प्राधिकरण की स्थापना चेन्नई में मुख्यालय के साथ की।

• **Which of the above statements are correct?** (a) 1, 2 and 4 only (b) 1 and 2 only (c) 2, 3 and 4 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

## ● What has India demonstrated?

**INDIA HAS SHOWN** that quantum key distribution (QKD) can be deployed over a network spanning 1,000 km by stitching together multiple shorter links. Each segment uses quantum principles to exchange encryption keys securely, while intermediate nodes connect these segments. The achievement lies in integrating these links into a functioning network using domestic technology within a short timeframe.

Quantum communications is seen as the next layer of secure communications as it can detect eavesdropping in real time. The 1,000-km scale signals progress from laboratory demonstrations to field deployment. It indicates that India has moved beyond point-to-point experiments to building a larger, operational network, which is essential for eventual real-world use in sectors such as defence, finance and critical infrastructure.

## ● How it differs from current internet security

**THE INTERNET RELIES** on public-key cryptography, including systems such as RSA encryption, where messages are encrypted using keys that are difficult to break. However, these systems assume that current computing limits will hold. An adversary can store encrypted data today and attempt to decrypt it later as computing power improves. Quantum communication addresses this by enabling key exchange mechanisms where any interception attempt alters the signal and is immediately detectable.



**SECURE DATA TRANSMISSION**

# Why India's 1,000-km quantum network is groundbreaking

India's recent demonstration of a 1,000-km quantum communication network using indigenous technology marks a step forward under the National Quantum Mission. *Rishi Raj* explains why this is a big move towards ultra-secure communications

## ● So, is communication now hack-proof?

**NO. QUANTUM COMMUNICATION** secures the key exchange process, not the entire system. In practice, the communication network still relies on intermediate nodes where quantum signals are converted into classical form

for onward transmission. These nodes must be trusted and secured through conventional means such as physical protection and hardware safeguards. If a node is compromised, the system can still be vulnerable.

**SECURE COMMUNICATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY TIED TO NATIONAL SECURITY AND DATA SOVEREIGNTY**

**2,000-km**

**NETWORK WITHIN 8 YEARS IS THE NEXT TARGET**

## ● Why is there a 1,000-km limit?

**THE LIMITATION IS** due to the behaviour of optical fibre networks. Quantum signals, carried as photons, degrade over distance due to losses and dispersion. Unlike classical signals, they cannot be amplified using standard repeaters without destroying their quantum properties. Long distances thus require breaking the network into shorter segments, each connected by trusted nodes. The 1,000-km figure reflects how far such a segmented system has been engineered to operate reliably.

## ● Can this distance be extended?

**IN THEORY, YES,** by adding more nodes. In practice, this creates trade-offs. Each additional node increases the number of points that must be secured, raising what engineers call a trust explosion problem. System performance also declines as latency increases and key generation rates fall across multiple hops. Beyond a point, complexity and cost become limiting factors.

## ● What does this mean for India's quantum ambitions?

**THE 1,000-KM ACHIEVEMENT** represents a scalable quantum-secure network rather than a seamless quantum internet. It is constrained more by engineering realities than by theoretical limits. The demonstration shows that India is building capabilities in both hardware and network integration for quantum communications. It positions India to participate in a global race where

## ● Can quantum repeaters help?

**A FULLY QUANTUM** internet would require quantum repeaters that can extend entanglement over long distances without converting signals into classical form. However, these technologies are still under development globally and are not yet ready for large-scale deployment. Until then, trusted-node architecture remain the practical approach.

## ● Do satellites offer an alternative?

**YES, SATELLITE-BASED** quantum communication is being explored as a way to bypass fibre limitations. Free-space transmission avoids dispersion issues seen in optical fibres and can cover longer distances with fewer intermediate nodes. However, this approach brings its own challenges, including alignment, atmospheric losses, limited bandwidth and high costs. It is likely to complement, rather than replace, terrestrial fibre networks.

secure communications are increasingly tied to national security and data sovereignty. However, significant work remains in scaling the technology, reducing costs and addressing vulnerabilities at network nodes. The advance is meaningful, but its implications should be seen in context: a step towards future-proof communications, not a finished solution.

- India demonstrated **Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)** over a **1,000-km network** using indigenous technology — a major milestone under the **National Quantum Mission**.
- भारत ने **राष्ट्रीय क्वांटम मिशन** के तहत स्वदेशी तकनीक से **1,000-km नेटवर्क** पर **क्वांटम की डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन (QKD)** का प्रदर्शन किया।
- The achievement marks India's transition from **laboratory experiments to field deployment** of quantum communications.
- यह उपलब्धि भारत के क्वांटम संचार में **प्रयोगशाला प्रयोगों से क्षेत्र तैनाती** की ओर संक्रमण को दर्शाती है।
- Next target: a **2,000-km network within 8 years**, signalling long-term strategic ambition.
- अगला लक्ष्य: **8 वर्षों में 2,000-km नेटवर्क**, दीर्घकालिक रणनीतिक महत्वाकांक्षा का संकेत।
- Quantum-secure communications are increasingly tied to **national security and data sovereignty**.
- क्वांटम-सुरक्षित संचार तेजी से **राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और डेटा संप्रभुता** से जुड़ते जा रहे हैं।
- This positions India in a **global race** for quantum communications supremacy alongside USA, China, and EU.
- यह भारत को अमेरिका, चीन और EU के साथ क्वांटम संचार में **वैश्विक प्रतिस्पर्धा** में स्थापित करता है।

- **Quantum communication** uses the laws of quantum physics to send information in a way that is theoretically impossible to intercept without being detected.
- **क्वांटम संचार** क्वांटम भौतिकी के नियमों का उपयोग करके जानकारी भेजता है जिसे पकड़े जाने के बिना बाधित करना सैद्धांतिक रूप से असंभव है।
- Today's internet uses **RSA encryption** — secure now, but vulnerable to future **quantum computers** that can break these codes.
- आज का इंटरनेट **RSA एन्क्रिप्शन** का उपयोग करता है — अभी सुरक्षित, लेकिन भविष्य के **क्वांटम कंप्यूटर** इसे तोड़ सकते हैं।
- **QKD (Quantum Key Distribution)** solves this by using quantum particles (photons) to exchange encryption keys — any eavesdropping immediately alters the signal and is detected.
- **QKD** क्वांटम कणों (फोटॉन) से एन्क्रिप्शन की आदान-प्रदान करके इसे हल करता है — कोई भी जासूसी तुरंत संकेत बदल देती है और पकड़ी जाती है।
- The **1,000-km achievement** works by stitching together multiple shorter quantum links with trusted intermediate nodes.
- **1,000-km उपलब्धि** कई छोटी क्वांटम लिंक को विश्वसनीय मध्यवर्ती नोड्स से जोड़कर काम करती है।
- This technology is critical for **defence, banking, and critical infrastructure** where data leaks can cause national harm.
- यह तकनीक **रक्षा, बैंकिंग और महत्वपूर्ण बुनियादी ढाँचे** के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है जहाँ डेटा लीक से राष्ट्रीय नुकसान हो सकता है।

- **Government of India** — through **National Quantum Mission (NQM)**, launched 2023; budget: ₹6,003 crore over 8 years.
- **भारत सरकार** — **राष्ट्रीय क्वांटम मिशन (NQM)** के माध्यम से, 2023 में लॉन्च; बजट: 8 वर्षों में ₹6,003 करोड़।
- **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** — nodal ministry for NQM.
- **विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग (DST)** — NQM के लिए नोडल मंत्रालय।
- **Global competitors:** China (has demonstrated 4,600-km quantum network), USA, EU — all in a race for quantum supremacy.
- **वैश्विक प्रतिस्पर्धी:** चीन (4,600-km क्वांटम नेटवर्क का प्रदर्शन), अमेरिका, EU — सभी क्वांटम वर्चस्व की दौड़ में।

### D3. Immediate Issue / तात्कालिक मुद्दा

- **Communication is NOT fully hack-proof yet** — quantum secures the key exchange, but intermediate nodes still convert quantum signals to classical form, creating vulnerability.
- संचार अभी पूरी तरह **हैक-प्रूफ नहीं** — क्वांटम की एक्सचेंज को सुरक्षित करता है, लेकिन मध्यवर्ती नोड्स अभी भी क्वांटम संकेतों को शास्त्रीय रूप में बदलते हैं, जिससे भेद्यता बनती है।
- **Trust explosion problem:** More nodes = more security points to protect = greater complexity and cost.
- **ट्रस्ट एक्सप्लोशन समस्या:** अधिक नोड्स = अधिक सुरक्षा बिंदु = अधिक जटिलता और लागत।
- **1,000-km limit** due to quantum signal degradation over optical fibres (photons lose quantum properties over distance).
- **1,000-km सीमा** ऑप्टिकल फाइबर पर क्वांटम संकेत क्षरण के कारण (फोटॉन दूरी पर क्वांटम गुण खो देते हैं)।

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

- **Defence:** Quantum-secure communications for military operations — prevents adversaries from intercepting strategic communications.
- **रक्षा:** सैन्य अभियानों के लिए क्वांटम-सुरक्षित संचार — विरोधियों को रणनीतिक संचार से रोकता है।
- **Data sovereignty:** Prevents foreign interception of sensitive government, financial, and infrastructure data.
- **डेटा संप्रभुता:** सरकारी, वित्तीय और बुनियादी ढाँचे के संवेदनशील डेटा का विदेशी अवरोधन रोकता है।
- **Indigenous capability:** Demonstrates India's self-reliance in critical technology — reduces dependence on foreign tech.
- **स्वदेशी क्षमता:** महत्वपूर्ण तकनीक में भारत की आत्मनिर्भरता दर्शाता है।
- **Economic opportunity:** Quantum technology market estimated to be worth **\$450 billion by 2030 globally.**
- **आर्थिक अवसर:** क्वांटम तकनीक बाजार 2030 तक वैश्विक स्तर पर **\$450 अरब** का अनुमानित।

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**Starrer facing calls to quit over Mandelson row**  
LONDON  
British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is facing calls to resign over revelations that his pick for the U.S. Ambassador to U.S. had been appointed despite failing security checks. Many felt Peter Mandelson was a risky appointment owing to his past links with sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. • PAGE 12

**FIR can be made against Rahul Gandhi, says HC**  
NEW DELHI  
The Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court on Friday directed the registration of an FIR and further investigation over the alleged British citizenship of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. Bench of Justice Brijbhush Shrivastava allowed the petition filed by S. Vignesh Shrinani. • PAGE 13

**TCS case accused to seek bail from court in Nashik**  
MUMBAI  
Nisha Khan, named an accused in one of the rare First Information Reports (FIR) registered in the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) sexual harassment and forcible conversion case, is set to move a local court in Nashik to seek anticipatory bail in the case. • PAGE 14

**Former President of Myanmar freed under amnesty**  
YANGON  
Myanmar's former President U Win Myint, who had been detained since a 2021 military coup, was freed on Friday under a mass amnesty which, according to a source close to state emergency leader Aung Mye Thaw, also reduced his 25-year sentence. The sanction order applied to more than 4,000 prisoners. • PAGE 15

# United Opposition defeats Delimitation Bill

The Bill falls short of the two-thirds mark of 352 votes, with 298 in favour and 230 against in the House where 528 members were present at the time of voting. Home Minister Amit Shah warns opposition that it will face the 'wrath of women voters, claims opposition to delimitation meant opposition to increasing the number of seats for SCs/STs

**Johanna K. Nair**  
**REEMSHA CHAKRABARTY**  
NEW DELHI

United Opposition on Friday defeated the Constitution (103rd Amendment) Bill, 2020, which sought to redistribute Lok Sabha seats on the basis of the 2011 Census to expedite the implementation of women's reservation.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah accused the Opposition of playing " Ruthless politics" and warned that it would face the "wrath of women voters". A total of 298 members voted in favour of the Bill and 230 against it, with the House strength at the time of voting being 528. It failed to meet the two-thirds majority mark of 352 required for a Bill to pass.

Following the defeat, the government withdrew two allied legislations — the

Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020, and the Delimitation Bill, 2020 — which were linked to the constitutional amendment.

The government excused the Budget session after a short interlude for deliberating on their Bills.

Mr. Shah said that the legislative package of three Bills was aimed at fulfilling two objectives — timely implementation of the women's reservation Bill for the 2020 general election and to apply the "foundational" democratic principle of "one person, one vote and one value".

Maintaining that the government remained committed to women's reservation, Mr. Shah said this was the "80th time" that parties of the Indian National Development Inclusive Alliance had stalled the legislation.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, in post

**Opposition joins hands**

Opposition parties debated a Constitutional Amendment Bill which sought to implement delimitation and increase Lok Sabha seats based on the 2011 Census.

Category	Number of MPs	Share
In favour	298	56.4%
Against	230	43.6%
Abstained	0	0%
Not present and voting	200	37.9%
Required (2/3 majority)	352	66.7%

**South made its voice heard, says Stalin**

CHENNAI

After the Bill, introduced by the BJP-led Union government, was defeated in the Lok Sabha, DMK president and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister N. K. Stalin said the South stood united, made its voice heard and democracy prevailed. • PAGE 8

ed due to the freeze based on the 1971 Census. He pointed out that India's population has grown from about 54.79 crore then to nearly 140 crore in 2026, leading to stark disparities in constituency size.

Chief Minister Jayaprakash Narayan, which has about 48 lakh voters, he asked how a single MP could represent such a large electorate. Mr. Shah also argued that opposition to delimitation effectively meant opposition to increasing the number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

He also addressed Opposition allegations that the government was trying to sidestep the ongoing caste count while implementing women's reservation.



Time to reap: Farmers harvest wheat in a field near Anwarpur on Friday. The process gathered pace across Punjab following a brief delay due to rains caused by the Western Disturbance in northwestern India. (AP)



Time to reap: Farmers harvest wheat in a field near Anwarpur on Friday. The process gathered pace across Punjab following a brief delay due to rains caused by the Western Disturbance in northwestern India. (AP)

# Karnataka Congress MLA sentenced to life term for murder of BJP leader

**Kelabagnarasud**  
BENGALURU

A special court in Bengaluru on Friday sentenced Congress MLA and former Minister Vinay Kulkarni and 16 others to imprisonment for life for criminal conspiracy and murder of a young BJP leader in Karnataka's Dharmwad district in 2016.

Kantooth Gajanan Bhat, judge of the special court of sessions for criminal cases against farmers and present MP and MLA, pronounced the sentence. Kulkarni, elected to the Legislative Assembly from the Dharmwad constituency, was named the prime accused in the murder of Vinay Kulkarni, a 26-year-old BJP MP, in Dharmwad in 2016.

The Karnataka police,

which initially probed the case, arrested six individuals. However, following demands from the victim's family and political pressure, the probe was transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 2019 after the BJP came to power in Karnataka.

**CBI contention**

The CBI said Kulkarni perceived Gondekar as a political rival in Dharmwad, and hired contract killers to eliminate him.

In February 2020, the Supreme Court granted bail to the legislator, after his previous release on bail was revoked over allegations that he tried to influence witnesses.

It was on June 18, 2020, that Gondekar was hacked to death in his gym at Saptagiri in Dharmwad. According to the CBI, the assassins immobilised him by throwing chili powder in his eyes before attacking him with lethal weapons. Mr. Kulkarni was then a Cabinet Minister in the Congress government in Karnataka.

Earlier, the CBI's counsel said the agency would not press for capital punishment, but seek life sentences for the accused.

Kulkarni had not only engaged contract killers for

take the life of a young person, but also organised state machinery as he was a Minister then.

Kulkarni's advocate argued that as the conviction was based on circumstantial evidence, there remains a place for "innocence" requiring the court to award a minimum sentence; also cited his social services and responsibilities towards the family.

The others, convicted are Vikram Ballar, Kirith Kumar Basavanna Ravath, B. Sandeep Soudatti, Vinayaka Katagi, Mahabaleswara Hongel, Sambhush Sankatti, Dinesh M. Ashwath, Renu, Ramesh Ahmed, Shanawass, Nathani, Harshith, Chandrahar Indu, Vikas Kallburgi, and Channakshasha B. Tingarban.

The court also imposed fine on the convicts.

# Iran declares the Strait of Hormuz open; Trump says U.S. blockade will continue

**Blocky jobs**

A day after U.S. President Donald Trump announced a 10-day ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, Iran said on Friday the Strait of Hormuz is "completely" open for commercial vessels for the remainder of the two-week U.S. ban phase.

Mr. Trump "thanked" Iran for removing the waterway but said the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports would continue until there is a deal between Tehran and Washington. Oil prices fell on Friday after the strait was declared open.

"In line with the ceasefire in Lebanon, the passage for all commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz is declared completely open for the remaining period of the ceasefire, on the coordinated route as already announced by POU and Maritime Organization of Iran," Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote in a social media post on Friday.

About 25% of the world's crude oil supply passes through the strait, which links the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, before the U.S. and Israel spread their war on Iran. The waterway also carries a significant share of global LNG exports, mainly from Qatar.

Iran said the blockade, which it broke out through the Strait last sharply, stopping from Monday. The U.S. said to single digits.

Mr. Trump welcomed Iran's decision, "Iran has just announced that the

Strait of Hormuz is fully open and ready for full passage. Thank you," he said in a post to capital letters. He also said Iran, "with the help of the U.S., has removed or is removing all sea mines" in the waterway. "Iran has agreed to remove the Strait of Hormuz again; it will no longer be used as a weapon against the world," he added.

Mr. Trump, however, said the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports, which he announced on April 12, "will remain in full force and effect... until such time as our transaction with Iran is 100% complete. This process should go very quickly in that most of the points are already negotiated."

The U.S. Central Command has said it has ended a complete blockade of ships going to and coming from Iranian ports, though shipping data suggests some Iran-linked ships have crossed the U.S. blockade.

France and Britain said on Friday that they will lead a multinational mission to ensure freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, while emphasizing the force would be entirely defensive and only deployed once a lasting peace in the region was agreed.

The war in Lebanon was a key sticking point in the U.S.-Iran ceasefire that was announced on April 8. Iran said Lebanon was covered under the ceasefire agreement, but later initially rejected it and said its war against Hezbollah would continue. Mr. Trump said last week that he had asked Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to scale back attacks on Lebanon. On Thursday, after announcing the 10-day ceasefire in Lebanon, Mr. Trump said he would invite Mr. Netanyahu and Lebanese President Joseph Aoun to Washington for the first high-level summit between the two countries.

Israel said on Thursday it would halt attacks on Lebanon but its troops would stay in the eastern territory of southern Lebanon.

Street crowd in Dharmwad were down roughly 10% on Friday, extending earlier losses, at below 500 a barrel. The U.S. benchmark WTI was also down 10% at around \$82 a barrel.

# Opposition joins hands

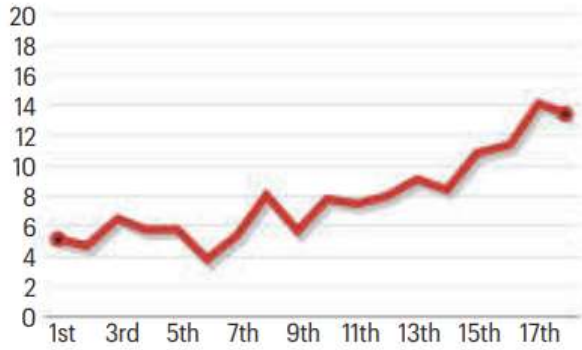
Opposition parties defeated a Constitution Amendment Bill which sought to implement delimitation and increase Lok Sabha seats based on the 2011 Census

Category	Number of MPs	Share
In favour	298	56.4%
Against	230	43.6%
Abstentions	0	0%
Total present and voting	528	100%
Required (2/3 <sup>rd</sup> majority)	352	66.7%



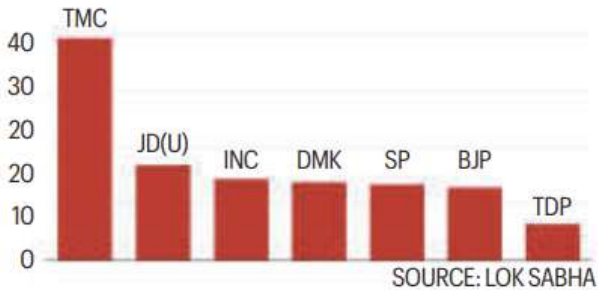
**House vote:** Members of Parliament vote on the Constitution Amendment Bill, which was part of a delimitation legislative package, during a special session in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

## 1. Share of women in LS (%)



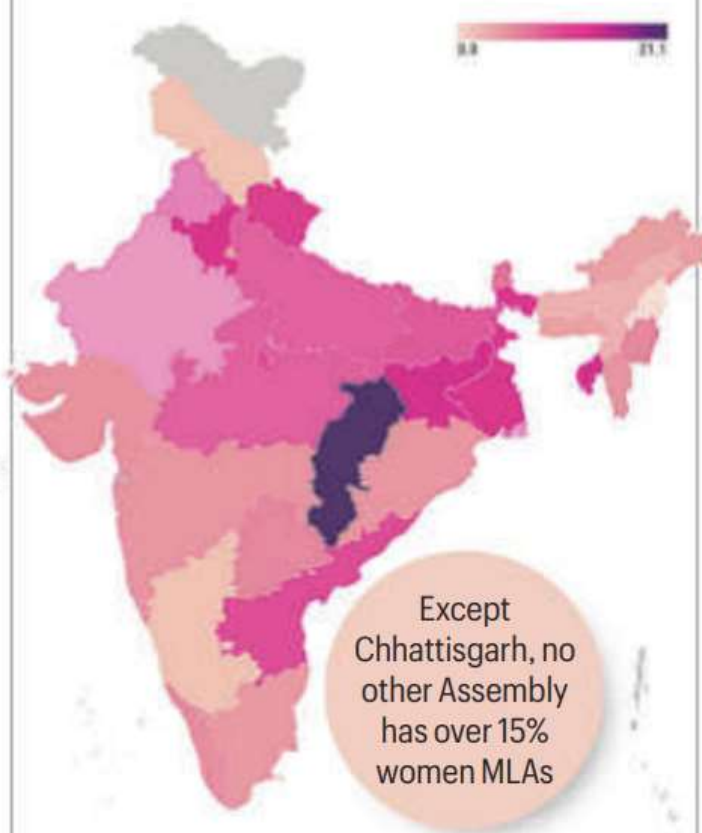
SOURCE: PRS LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH, ECI

## 2. Party-wise share in LS (%)



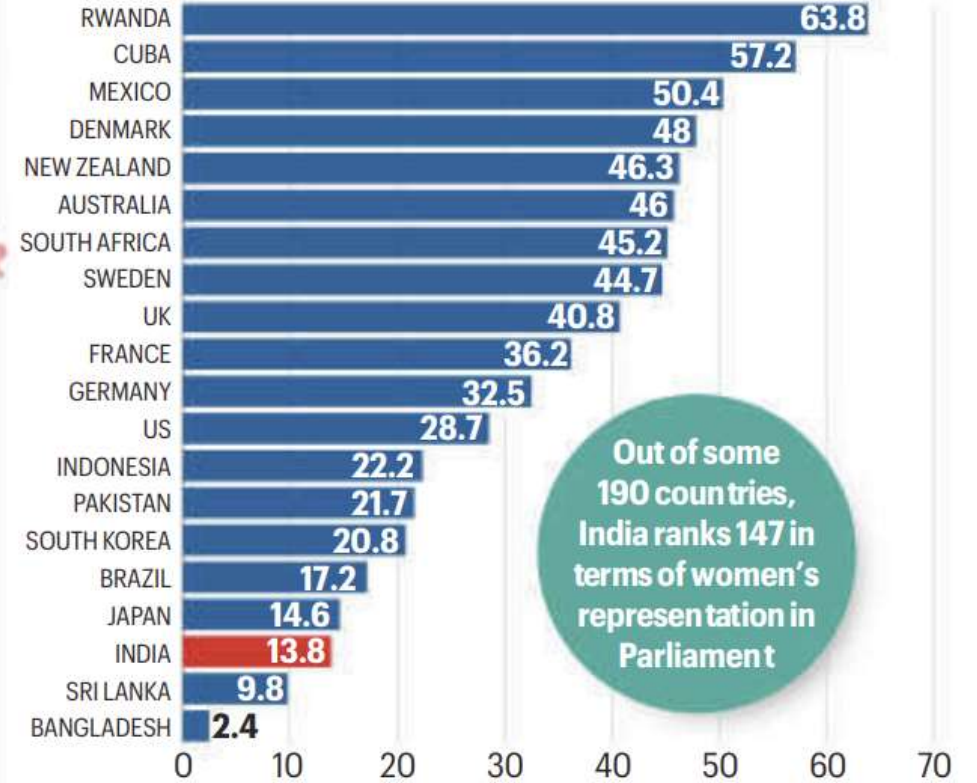
SOURCE: LOK SABHA

## 3. Women MLAs (%)



SOURCE: VIDHAN SABHAS, PRS LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH

## 4. Global trends: women parliamentarians (%)



Out of some 190 countries, India ranks 147 in terms of women's representation in Parliament

THIS CHART REFERS TO FIGURES ONLY IN THE LOWER HOUSE OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS AS OF APRIL 2026. SOURCE: PARLINE/IPU

MELBOURNE

Australian former soldier gets bail on Afghan war crime charges



Australia's most decorated living veteran, then Robert Smith, walked free on bail from a Sydney prison on Friday, 10 days after he was charged with war crimes in the killings of five people while serving in Afghanistan. The charges follow a report that SAS and commando regiment troops unlawfully killed 39 Afghan civilians in

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka repatriates survivors of U.S. torpedo attack on Iranian ship



Sri Lanka sent home 238 Iranian sailors, including 23 who survived a U.S. torpedo attack that sank their ship in the Indian Ocean, officials said. A U.S. submarine sank the 302 Doron on March 4 while the ship was returning home from a naval exercise hosted by India. A second Iranian ship docked at a Sri Lankan port after technical problems, an

WASHINGTON

IMF, World Bank restore relations with Venezuela, detainees released



Venezuela freed 48 political prisoners, detainees' families said on Thursday, in the latest release after the U.S. ouster of leader Nicolas Maduro. Meanwhile, the IMF and World Bank said they are restoring relations with the South American country, further legitimising the current government and opening doors to financial support. AFP

GENEVA

Rohingya sea crossings hit record death toll in 2025, UN report says



Last year was the deadliest on record for Rohingya refugees fleeing by sea, the UN said on Friday. In 2023, nearly 900 Rohingya refugees were reported missing or dead in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal, the UNHCR said. The report came days after a boat carrying about 280 Rohingya refugees had capsized in the Andaman Sea. AFP

Truce in effect as Trump says Israel 'prohibited' from bombing Lebanon

Israel will not be bombing Lebanon any longer, enough is enough, says U.S. leader, he adds that Washington would work with Beirut to deal with Hezbollah; displaced residents stream towards southern Lebanon after the truce came into force

Agence France-Presse LAS VEGAS

President Donald Trump said on Friday the United States had "prohibited" Israel from bombing Lebanon any longer, following a ceasefire deal, adding that Washington would work with Lebanon to "deal with" Hezbollah.

Israel will not be bombing Lebanon any longer, they are prohibited from doing so by the U.S.A. enough is enough," Mr. Trump said on his Truth Social network, a day after announcing the 10-day truce. The ceasefire took effect on Friday, sending displaced Lebanese fleeing towards their homes, even as the Lebanese Army warned of "a number of violations" in the area.



Homebound children gather from a vehicle as displaced people drive back to their neighbourhoods near Tyre in Lebanon. Reuters

Shortly after the truce went into effect at midnight local time, the Army told residents of the south — many of whom had to flee their homes following sweeping Israeli evacuations — to return to their homes, even as the Lebanese Army warned of "a number of violations" in the area.

a key step in Washington's efforts to reach a deal to end its war with Iran, with Tehran insisting a Lebanon truce must be part of any agreement.

Mediator Islamabad has been leading the international push to restart face-to-face talks between Tehran and Washington with Mr. Trump signalling he might try to Pakistan to sign any agreement.

The fighting in Lebanon broke out on March 2 when Tehran-backed Hezbollah fired rockets at Israel just a few days after the start of the war in retaliation for the death of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in the opening weeks of U.S.-Israel strikes.

Lebanon's Litani River to the rest of the country, as people lived up for hours waiting for a chance to return home.

As the ceasefire came into effect, Israel's military said it had struck over 380 Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon and was on "high alert" to resume strikes.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the ceasefire offered an opportunity for a "historic peace agreement" with Beirut — but insisted that the disarmament of Hezbollah remained a precondition.

Starmer faces calls to resign as Mandelson row reignites

Associated Press LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Friday resisted demands he resign over revelations that his scandal-tainted pick for U.K. Ambassador to Washington was appointed despite failing security checks.

Mr. Starmer says he was not informed that the Foreign Office had overruled the recommendation of security officials in 2025 not to give Peter Mandelson the job. Many considered Mr. Mandelson a risky appointment because of his past friendship with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

Mr. Starmer fired Mandelson in September 2023 after he had lied about the extent of his links to Epstein, or was warned that he had been kept in the dark, calling it "staggering" and "unforgivable."



Keir Starmer

He said he would "set out all the relevant facts in true transparency" to Parliament on Monday.

Another official quit The top Foreign Office civil servant, City Robbins, took the fall for the decision and resigned.

Opposition politicians expressed disbelief that Mr. Starmer could have been unaware Mr. Mandelson had failed security vetting.

Barron Jones, the Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister, said on Friday that "the recommendation was

to not appoint Peter Mandelson to the role," and that the Foreign Office ignored it. He said that was "astounding," but within the rules.

Mr. Jones said the checks, carried out by a department known as U.K. Security Vetting, go through financial, personal, sexual, religious and other types of background information, and that is why it is kept private on a portal that only a few people have access to.

Opposition Conservative Party leader Kemi Badenoch said claims the Prime Minister did not know were "completely preposterous."

Documents released by the government in March showed Mr. Starmer ignored red flags raised by his staff about the appointment. He was warned that Mr. Mandelson's friendship with Jeffrey Epstein, who died in prison in 2019, exposed the government to "reputational risk."

Myanmar ex-President freed, Suu Kyi's sentence reduced

Agence France-Presse YANGON

Myanmar's former President Win Myint, detained since a 2021 military coup, was freed on Friday under a mass amnesty program, according to a source close to pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, also reduced her sentence.

The pardon order applied to more than 4,000 prisoners.

Mr. Win Myint and Ms. Suu Kyi, the 80-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate led Myanmar during a decade-long experiment with civilian rule that was abruptly halted by the coup.

Mr. Win Myint, who served from 2018, was pardoned of convictions handed down during the post-coup period of military rule and released on Friday, a spokesman for his party said.



Aung San Suu Kyi

Ms. Suu Kyi meanwhile remains detained, serving a sentence rights groups decry as a politically motivated move to hobble her National League for Democracy (NLD) party.

A source close to her legal case said that Ms. Suu Kyi's 27-year sentence had been cut as part of the amnesty.

The order announced by Win Aung Hlaing — the coup leader who ousted Ms. Suu Kyi's government and was sworn in last week

as civilian President — to reduce the remaining terms of all sentences under 40 years by one-sixth "also applies to her", the source said.

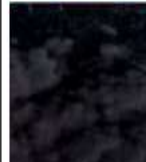
It is unclear how much of her term was considered served before the commutation order.

US rights chief Volker Turk said that "all those detained unjustly since the coup, including Ms. Suu Kyi, need to be released immediately and unconditionally."

Death penalties Min Aung Hlaing on Friday also commuted all death sentences and ordered the release of more than 4,300 prisoners in an amnesty to mark Myanmar's new year — one of many public holidays when mass pardons are commonly made.

But Mr. Win Myint's pardon is perhaps the most significant climb-down so far.

Fire and smoke



A satellite image shows smoke rising from the Tuzupai oil refinery in Tuzupai, Russia. Firefighters continued extinguishing a blaze more than 24 hours after Ukrainian drone attacks, local authorities said. The attack on Thursday killed two people, including a 14-year-old girl. Ukraine's military said it had struck two oil depots in Russian-controlled Crimea and infrastructure in Yuzupai. AFP

It is unclear how much of her term was considered served before the commutation order.

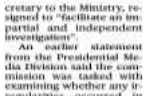
Sri Lankan Minister resigns amid allegations of graft

Reuters COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Energy Minister, Kumara Jayakody, resigned from his position on Friday amid mounting opposition over allegations of corruption and substantial coal procurement.

This resignation came as President Anura Kumara Dissanayake appointed a commission to investigate irregularities in coal imports.

A statement from the president's office said the Minister, along with the Secretary to the Ministry, requested to "facilitate an impartial and independent investigation."



Kumara Jayakody

An earlier statement from the Presidential Media Division said the commission was tasked with examining whether any irregularities occurred in coal imports and in the generation of electricity by the State-owned Lanka Coal Company (Private) Limited or its successors.

In March, Minister Jayakody was granted bail by the Colombo High Court

private company in a procurement process.

The indictment triggered criticism from members of the political opposition and civil society, who reminded the Dissanayake government and the ruling National People's Power administration of their key pre-poll promise of wiping out corruption.

The Opposition tabled the No Confidence Motion against the Minister last week, but it was defeated in Parliament.

Until Friday, senior figures in government appeared to back the Energy Minister, dismissing the corruption allegations as unsubstantiated. However, calls for Mr. Jayakody's resignation grew louder, with highlighting media attention on the issue last week, local newspaper Daily FT said in its editorial.

"The Government's moves to defend Mr. Jayakody in spite of serious allegations against him would undoubtedly undermine its credibility and reputation."

China decries Japanese ship transiting Taiwan Strait

Reuters BEIJING

China said it monitored a Japanese warship's transit in the Taiwan Strait on Friday, calling the move "a deliberate provocation, as Beijing's ties with Tokyo remain fraught."

The Japanese destroyer JS Katsurichi transited the Taiwan Strait, and the Chinese military forces monitored the vessel throughout the passage.

A Chinese military spokesman said in a statement, Japan's dispatch of a military vessel into the Taiwan Strait, as "a display of force" and "a deliberate provocation," marks a "mistake upon mistake" and threatens China's sovereignty and security.

China's Foreign Ministry said.

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Israel killed over 38,000 women, girls in Gaza by end of 2025: UN

Agence France-Presse GENEVA

Over 38,000 women and girls were killed in the Gaza war by the end of 2025, the UN estimated on Friday, amounting to over half of the 75,000 deaths recorded by the territory's Health Ministry.

Between October 2023 and December 2023, more than 38,000 women and girls were killed, a result of Israeli air bombardment and land military operations, the UN Women agency's spokeswoman Sofia Callotro said.

"This includes 16,000 girls, amounting to an average of at least 47 women and girls killed every day."

The agency said the true figures were likely to be higher, with bodies still buried under rubble and reporting systems severely constrained.

A UN Women report found that women and girls made up 18% of those killed in the 2008-2009 conflict and 22% in the 2014 conflict.

UN Women said those who had survived face daily threats to their lives, starvation, recurrent displacement and restricted access to essential services.

"Nearly 15,000 women and girls have sustained injuries so devastating that they survive only with lifelong disabilities," said Ms. Callotro.

# Myanmar ex-President freed, Suu Kyi's sentence reduced

**Agence France-Presse**  
YANGON

Myanmar's former President Win Myint, detained since a 2021 military coup, was freed on Friday under a mass amnesty which, according to a source close to pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, also reduced her sentence.

The pardon order applied to more than 4,000 prisoners.

Mr. Win Myint and Ms. Suu Kyi, the 80-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate, led Myanmar during a decade-long experiment with civilian rule that was abruptly halted by the coup.

Mr. Win Myint, who served from 2018, was pardoned of convictions handed down during the post-putsch period of military rule and released on Friday, a spokesman for his party said.



Aung San Suu Kyi

Ms. Suu Kyi meanwhile remains detained, serving a sentence rights groups decry as a politically motivated move to hobble her National League for Democracy (NLD) party.

A source close to her legal case said that Ms. Suu Kyi's 27-year sentence had been cut as part of the amnesty.

The order announced by Min Aung Hlaing – the coup leader who ousted Ms. Suu Kyi's government and was sworn in last week

as civilian President– to reduce the remaining terms of all sentences under 40 years by one-sixth “also applies to her”, the source said.

It is unclear how much of her term was considered served before the commutation order.

UN rights chief Volker Turk said that “all those detained unjustly since the coup, including Ms. Suu Kyi, need to be released immediately and unconditionally”.

## **Death penalties**

Min Aung Hlaing on Friday also commuted all death sentences and ordered the release of more than 4,300 prisoners in an amnesty to mark Myanmar's new year – one of many public holidays when mass pardons are commonly made. But Mr. Win Myint's pardon is perhaps the most significant climb-down so far.

- Myanmar's former President **Win Myint** (detained since 2021 coup) was **freed** under a mass amnesty covering **4,000+ prisoners**.
- म्यांमार के पूर्व राष्ट्रपति **विन मिंट** (2021 तख्तापलट से हिरासत में) **4,000+ कैदियों** की सामूहिक माफी के तहत **रिहा** हुए।
- Pro-democracy leader and **Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi's 27-year sentence was reduced** — but she remains detained.
- लोकतंत्र समर्थक नेता और **नोबेल शांति पुरस्कार विजेता आंग सान सू की की 27 साल की सजा कम हुई** — लेकिन वह अभी भी हिरासत में हैं।
- The amnesty was announced by coup leader **Min Aung Hlaing**, who was also **sworn in as civilian President** last week — all death sentences also commuted.
- माफी की घोषणा तख्तापलट नेता **मिन आंग ह्लाइंग** ने की, जो पिछले सप्ताह **नागरिक राष्ट्रपति** के रूप में शपथ लिए — सभी मृत्युदंड भी माफ किए गए।
- **UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk** called for unconditional release of all those detained since the coup, including Suu Kyi.
- **UN मानवाधिकार प्रमुख वोल्कर टर्क** ने तख्तापलट के बाद हिरासत में लिए गए सभी लोगों, सहित सू की, की बिना शर्त रिहाई की माँग की।
- The amnesty coincides with **Myanmar's New Year** — a traditional occasion for mass pardons.
- माफी **म्यांमार के नए साल** के अवसर पर दी गई — सामूहिक माफी के लिए पारंपरिक अवसर।

- **Myanmar** (formerly Burma) is a Southeast Asian country that had a **military coup on February 1, 2021** — the army (Tatmadaw) removed the democratically elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.
- **म्यांमार** (पूर्व में बर्मा) एक दक्षिण-पूर्व एशियाई देश है जहाँ **1 फरवरी 2021 को सैन्य तख्तापलट** हुआ — सेना (टाटमाडा) ने आंग सान सू की की लोकतांत्रिक सरकार हटाई।
- **Aung San Suu Kyi** is a globally respected democracy icon who won the Nobel Peace Prize (1991) and led Myanmar's civilian government from 2016.
- **आंग सान सू की** एक विश्व-प्रसिद्ध लोकतंत्र प्रतीक हैं जिन्होंने नोबेल शांति पुरस्कार (1991) जीता और 2016 से म्यांमार की नागरिक सरकार का नेतृत्व किया।
- The military junta convicted her on **politically motivated charges** totalling 27 years imprisonment — rights groups say these convictions were designed to eliminate her from politics.
- सैन्य जुंटा ने उन्हें **राजनीतिक रूप से प्रेरित आरोपों** पर कुल 27 साल की कैद दी — अधिकार समूहों का कहना है ये दोषसिद्धि उन्हें राजनीति से बाहर करने के लिए थीं।
- A **mass amnesty** during Myanmar New Year is tradition — but this time it is politically significant as it freed the former President and slightly reduced Suu Kyi's sentence.
- म्यांमार नए साल पर **सामूहिक माफी** परंपरा है — लेकिन इस बार यह राजनीतिक रूप से महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि पूर्व राष्ट्रपति रिहा हुए और सू की की सजा थोड़ी कम हुई।

- Myanmar has experienced **multiple military coups** — 1962 (Ne Win), 1988, 2021.
- म्यांमार में कई सैन्य तख्तापलट हुए — 1962 (ने विन), 1988, 2021।
- The **2021 coup** was triggered by military's allegations of fraud in the **November 2020 elections** (which NLD won with 83% seats).
- **2021 तख्तापलट** सेना के नवंबर **2020 चुनावों** में धोखाधड़ी के आरोपों (जो NLD ने 83% सीटों से जीते) से हुआ।
- Myanmar sits at the **geopolitical crossroads** of India, China, ASEAN — making its stability critical for the region.
- म्यांमार भारत, चीन, ASEAN के भू-राजनीतिक चौराहे पर है — इसकी स्थिरता क्षेत्र के लिए महत्वपूर्ण।
- **China** has been the primary backer of the Myanmar junta; **ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus** (2021) has largely failed to resolve the crisis.
- चीन म्यांमार जुंटा का प्राथमिक समर्थक रहा है; **ASEAN की पाँच-बिंदु सहमति** (2021) संकट हल करने में काफी हद तक विफल रही।

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

- India shares a **1,643-km border** with Myanmar — instability directly affects Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh.
- भारत म्यांमार के साथ **1,643-km सीमा** साझा करता है — अस्थिरता सीधे मणिपुर, मिजोरम, नागालैंड, अरुणाचल प्रदेश को प्रभावित करती है।
- **Refugee influx:** Myanmar refugees (Chin, Kuki communities) entering India's northeast — creates humanitarian and security challenges.
- **शरणार्थी प्रवाह:** म्यांमार शरणार्थी (चिन, कुकी समुदाय) भारत के उत्तर-पूर्व में आ रहे हैं — मानवीय और सुरक्षा चुनौतियाँ।
- India's **Act East Policy** and **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project** depend on Myanmar stability.
- भारत की **एक्ट ईस्ट नीति** और **कलादान मल्टी-मोडल ट्रांजिट ट्रांसपोर्ट प्रोजेक्ट** म्यांमार की स्थिरता पर निर्भर।
- **Drug trafficking** and **arms smuggling** through Myanmar's porous border affects India's northeast security.
- म्यांमार की पारगम्य सीमा से **नशीले पदार्थों की तस्करी** और **हथियारों की तस्करी** भारत के उत्तर-पूर्व सुरक्षा को प्रभावित करती है।
- India's **Free Movement Regime (FMR)** with Myanmar — recently abolished in 2024 — was a key border management policy.
- म्यांमार के साथ भारत का **मुक्त आवाजाही शासन (FMR)** — 2024 में हाल ही में समाप्त — एक प्रमुख सीमा प्रबंधन नीति थी।

- Myanmar borders: **India** (NW), **China** (N/NE), **Laos** (E), **Thailand** (SE), **Bangladesh** (W); Bay of Bengal coastline.
- म्यांमार की सीमाएँ: **भारत** (उत्तर-पश्चिम), **चीन** (उत्तर/उत्तर-पूर्व), **लाओस** (पूर्व), **थाईलैंड** (दक्षिण-पूर्व), **बांग्लादेश** (पश्चिम); बंगाल की खाड़ी तट।
- Capital: **Naypyidaw**; Largest city: **Yangon** (Rangoon).
- राजधानी: **नेपीडॉ**; सबसे बड़ा शहर: **यांगून** (रंगून)।
- **Irrawaddy River** — lifeline of Myanmar; strategic waterway.
- **इरावदी नदी** — म्यांमार की जीवन रेखा; रणनीतिक जलमार्ग।
- **Golden Triangle** — drug production region at Myanmar-Laos-Thailand junction.
- **गोल्डन ट्राइएंगल** — म्यांमार-लाओस-थाईलैंड संगम पर मादक पदार्थ उत्पादन क्षेत्र।
- **Polity / राजव्यवस्था:**
  - **UN Charter Article 2(7):** Non-interference in internal affairs — limits direct UN intervention in Myanmar.
  - **UN चार्टर अनुच्छेद 2(7):** आंतरिक मामलों में हस्तक्षेप नहीं — म्यांमार में सीधे UN हस्तक्षेप को सीमित करता है।
  - **Responsibility to Protect (R2P):** UN doctrine — if a state fails to protect its people, international community can intervene.
  - **संरक्षण की जिम्मेदारी (R2P):** UN सिद्धांत — यदि राज्य अपने लोगों की रक्षा नहीं करता तो अंतर्राष्ट्रीय समुदाय हस्तक्षेप कर सकता है।
  - **ASEAN Five-Point Consensus (2021):** Immediate cessation of violence; constructive dialogue; mediator appointment; humanitarian aid; ASEAN envoy visit — largely unimplemented.
  - **ASEAN पाँच-बिंदु सहमति (2021):** तत्काल हिंसा बंद; रचनात्मक संवाद; मध्यस्थ नियुक्ति; मानवीय सहायता; ASEAN दूत यात्रा — काफी हद तक अलागू नहीं।

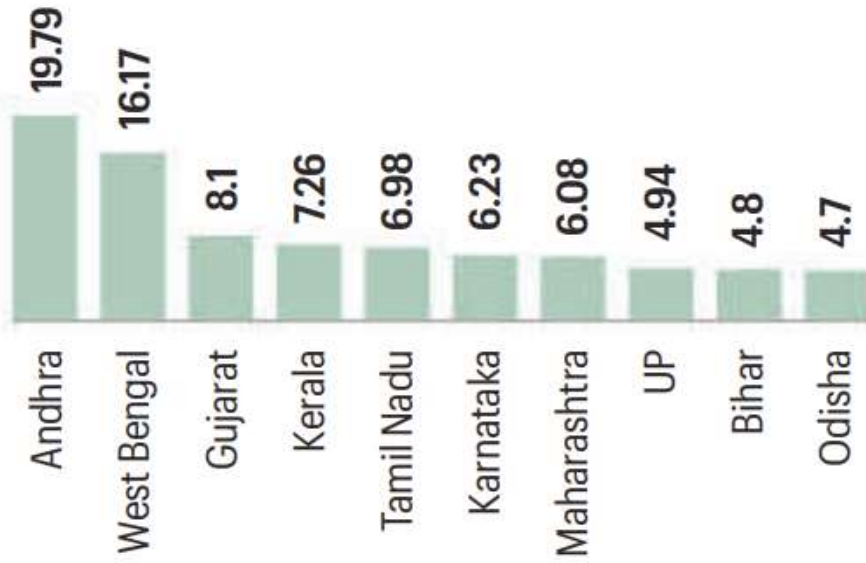
- **1948:** Burma independence from Britain.
- **1948:** ब्रिटेन से बर्मा की स्वतंत्रता।
- **1962:** Military coup by General Ne Win; decades of isolation.
- **1962:** जनरल ने विन द्वारा सैन्य तख्तापलट; दशकों का अलगाव।
- **1988:** 8888 Uprising; Suu Kyi emerged; NLD formed.
- **1988:** 8888 विद्रोह; सू की उभरीं; NLD गठन।
- **1990:** NLD won elections with 80% seats — military refused to transfer power.
- **1990:** NLD ने 80% सीटों से चुनाव जीता — सेना ने सत्ता हस्तांतरण से इनकार किया।
- **1991:** Suu Kyi awarded Nobel Peace Prize while under house arrest.
- **1991:** सू की को नजरबंदी के दौरान नोबेल शांति पुरस्कार।
- **2011-2021:** Decade of quasi-democratic rule; Suu Kyi as State Counsellor; NLD won 2015 and 2020 elections.
- **2011-2021:** अर्ध-लोकतांत्रिक शासन का दशक; सू की स्टेट काउंसलर; NLD ने 2015 और 2020 चुनाव जीते।
- **2017:** Rohingya crisis — military's brutal crackdown; 700,000+ fled to Bangladesh; ICJ case filed.
- **2017:** रोहिंग्या संकट — सेना की क्रूर कार्रवाई; 700,000+ बांग्लादेश भागे; ICJ मामला दर्ज।
- **February 1, 2021:** Military coup; Suu Kyi and Win Myint arrested; State of Emergency declared.
- **1 फरवरी 2021:** सैन्य तख्तापलट; सू की और विन मिंग गिरफ्तार; आपातकाल घोषित।

## • WHERE BENGAL STANDS IN FISH PRODUCTION

In West Bengal, fish has turned into a contested political issue during campaigning. While the TMC has criticised the ban on open sale of fish in some BJP-ruled states, PM Narendra Modi has targeted it for “failing” to make Bengal self-sufficient in fish production. However, data shows that the state has been the second highest producer of fish since 2014-15.

Top states on inland and marine fish production (in lakh tonnes)

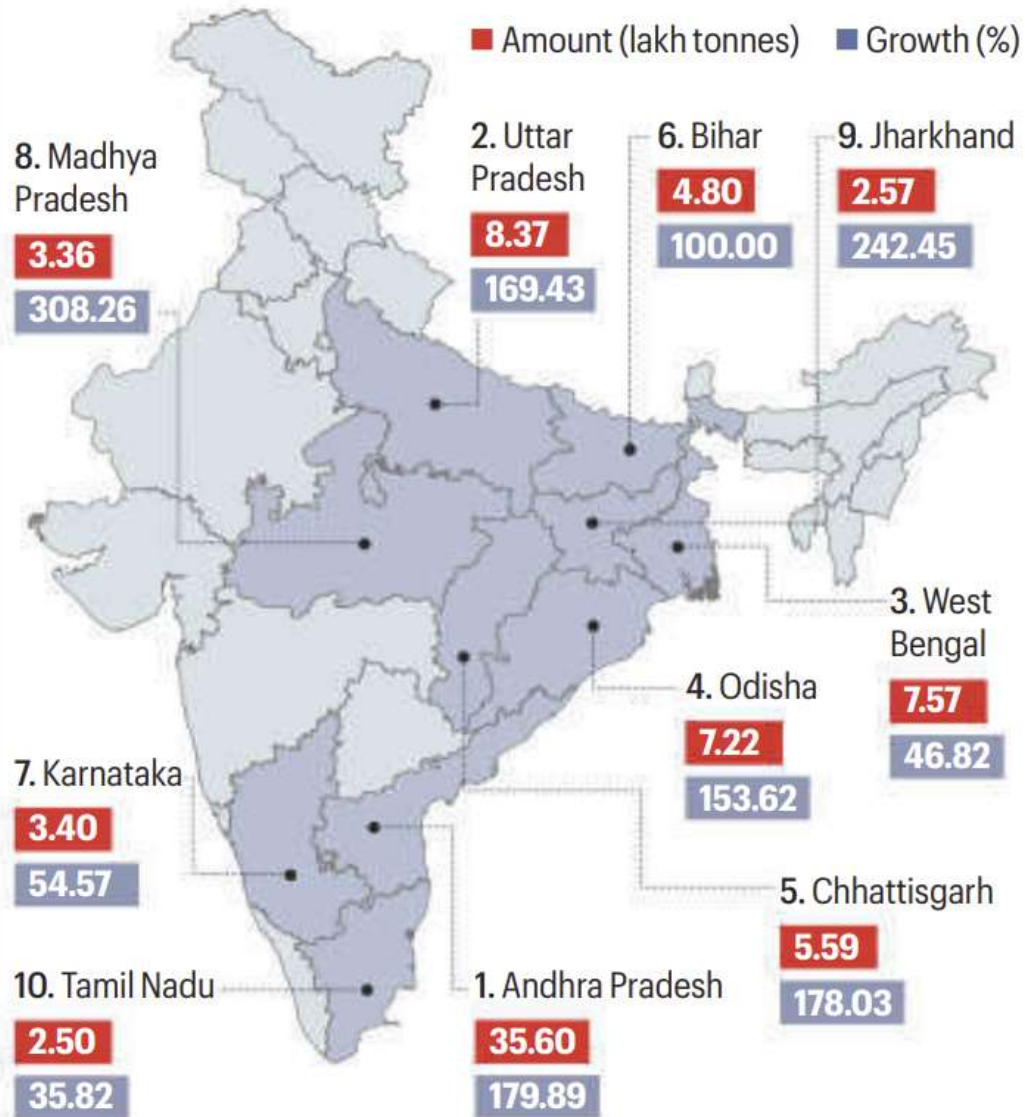
2014-15



2024-25



## States with highest growth in fish production between 2014-15 and 2024-25



SOURCE: UNION MINISTRY OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, DAIRYING AND FISHERIES

- Though Andhra Pradesh saw the highest absolute increase in fish production over the last decade, Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest rise in percentage terms at 308%

- As many as 12 states saw their fish production double between 2014-15 and 2024-25

- In Andhra, the top producer in India, almost all the production comes from inland fisheries, accounting for 88% of its total output

- While Bengal ranks second in inland production at 20.07 lakh tonnes, it ranks seventh in marine production at 3.67 lakh tonnes. Bengal's rank has remained unchanged since 2014-15. Gujarat tops the country in marine production at 7.64 lakh tonnes

• ECONOMICS

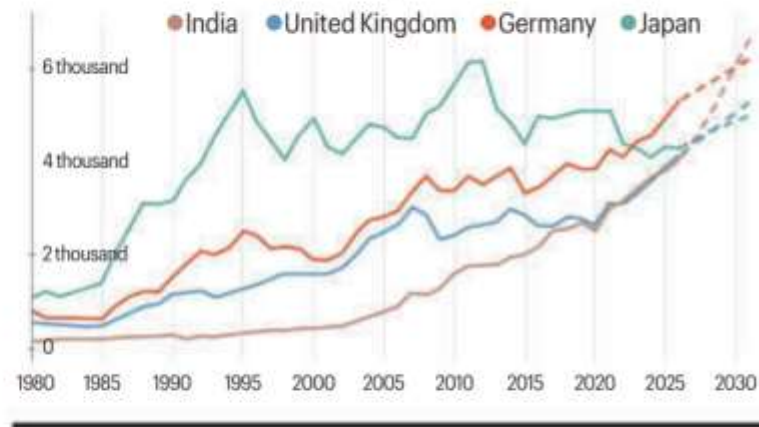
# How India's economy slipped to sixth largest, behind Japan, UK



INDIA IS no longer the fourth largest economy in the world, according to the latest World Economic Outlook released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In 2026, India's gross domestic product (GDP) — the total value of all goods and services produced inside the country — will be around \$4.15 trillion (up from \$3.92 trillion in 2025), while the UK's GDP will be \$4.27 trillion (up from \$4 trillion in 2025) and Japan's GDP would actually fall from \$4.48 trillion in 2025 to \$4.38 trillion in 2026.

When India overtook the UK to become the world's fifth largest economy in 2022, it was celebrated given India's Brit-

## • GDP at current prices (in billion of US\$)



SOURCE: WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK (APRIL 2026)

ish colonial past. Given India's growth trajectory and the longstanding economic stagnation in Germany and Japan, India was expected to overtake Germany (then fourth) and Japan (then third) by 2029. But Germany overtook Japan before India could overtake Germany.

In May 2025, Niti Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam declared that India had overtaken Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy. But now, India has slid down to sixth.

### Why this sudden change?

When IMF calculates its rankings in US dollar terms, it uses two data points: one, a country's GDP in the local currency and two, the exchange rate with the dollar to arrive at a dollar figure. On both counts, India suffered significant setbacks in the past year.

Firstly, India updated its GDP estimates with a new base in February 2026. The new estimates showed that the previous GDP series was overestimating India's GDP. In rupee terms, India's GDP for 2025-26 was rolled back from Rs 357 trillion (or lakh crore) to Rs 345 trillion.

Secondly, the rupee has rapidly lost its value relative to the US dollar over the past year. This fall in the exchange rate has happened when the dollar itself has lost value

against other currencies such as the British pound and the Japanese yen. That means when IMF calculates GDP in dollar terms, the gap between India's GDP and that of the UK's or Japan's expands further.

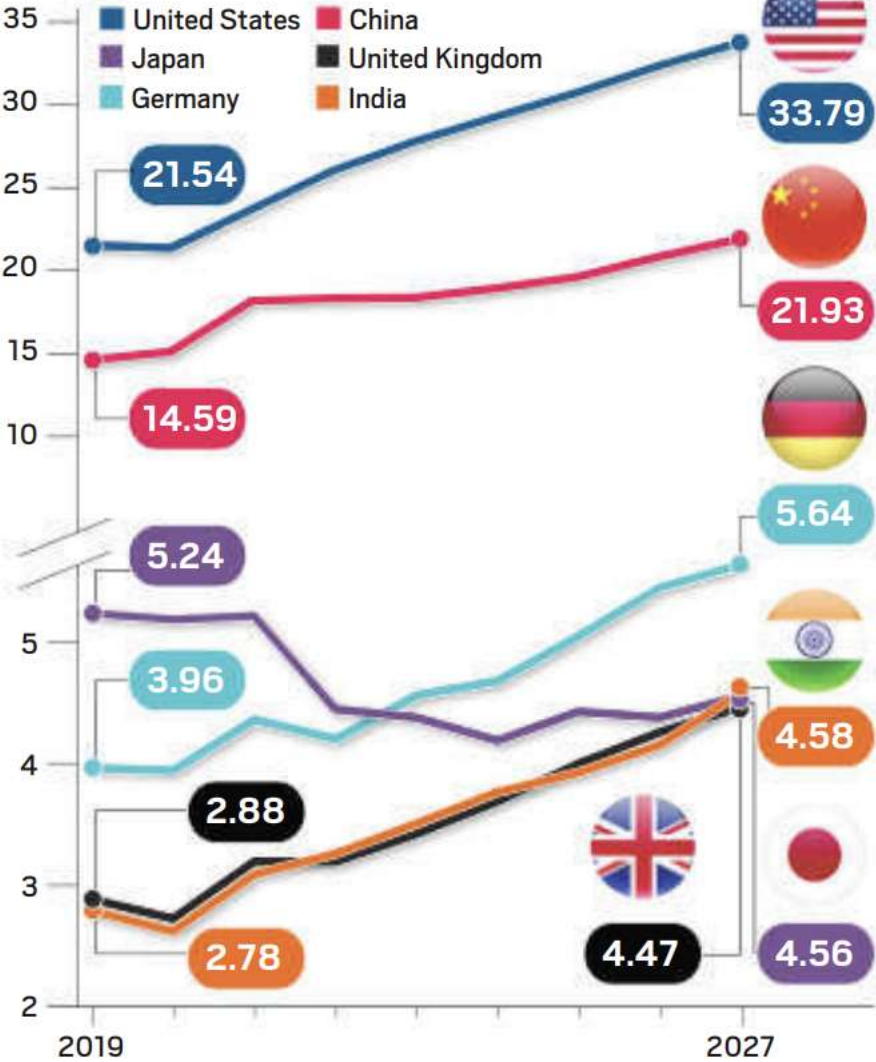
For instance, India's GDP for 2025 fell from being \$4.1 trillion (old estimates) to \$3.9 trillion (new estimates). That allowed Japan to overtake India. For similar reasons, the UK is expected to overtake India in 2026.

### Will India recover?

There is a big gap between the world's top two economies and the rest. The US GDP in 2026 is expected to be \$32.38 trillion while China is pegged at \$20.85 trillion. But after the top two, the next four economies are very closely bunched together around the \$4 trillion mark.

IMF projects that notwithstanding the setback in 2026, India will retake the fourth position in 2027, though overtaking third-placed Germany is expected to happen in 2031.

**GDP, current prices (Trillion of U.S. dollars)**



Source: IMF

Aspect	Details (Fact + Value Addition)
News Context	India slipped to <b>6th largest economy (2026)</b> as per <u>International Monetary Fund (IMF)</u>
Earlier Position	India became <b>5th largest in 2022</b> (overtook UK)
Current Ranking (2026)	1. USA 2. China 3. Germany 4. Japan 5. UK 6. India
India GDP (2026)	~\$4.15 trillion (revised estimates lower earlier expectations)
UK GDP (2026)	~\$4.27 trillion
Japan GDP (2026)	~\$4.38 trillion
Key Reason (Core Concept)	IMF ranks economies in <b>US Dollar terms (Nominal GDP)</b>
Main Factors Behind Fall	<b>1. GDP revision (base year update) 2. Rupee depreciation vs Dollar</b>
GDP Revision Impact	India's GDP revised from ~₹357 lakh crore → ~₹345 lakh crore
Exchange Rate Impact	Rupee depreciation reduces GDP value in dollar terms
Currency Factor Insight	Even if real output rises, weaker currency lowers global ranking
Oil Price Link	Falling oil prices slightly support economy but not enough to offset ranking drop

<b>Oil Price Link</b>	Falling oil prices slightly support economy but not enough to offset ranking drop
<b>IMF Methodology</b>	Uses: 1. GDP in local currency 2. Exchange rate conversion to USD
<b>Why Japan/UK Overtook</b>	Stronger currencies (Yen/Pound) relative to Rupee
<b>Short-term vs Structural</b>	This fall is <b>temporary/statistical</b> , not due to structural slowdown
<b>Future Projection</b>	IMF expects India to regain <b>4th position by 2027</b>
<b>Long-term Projection</b>	India may become <b>3rd largest by ~2031</b> (overtake Germany)
<b>Global Context</b>	Huge gap: USA (~\$32T) & China (~\$20T) vs others (~\$4T cluster)
<b>Economic Concept</b>	<b>Nominal GDP vs PPP GDP</b> (India is 3rd largest in PPP terms)
<b>PPP Advantage</b>	Reflects <b>domestic purchasing power</b> , less affected by exchange rates
<b>Exam Trap</b>	Ranking change $\neq$ economic slowdown necessarily
<b>Important Term</b>	<b>Base Year Revision</b> $\rightarrow$ improves accuracy but may reduce estimates

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Exam Relevance</b>
<b>Nominal GDP</b>	GDP measured in current prices (USD)	Used for global ranking
<b>PPP GDP</b>	GDP adjusted for purchasing power	Better for living standards
<b>Exchange Rate Effect</b>	Currency depreciation lowers USD GDP	Key reason for ranking change
<b>Base Year Revision</b>	Updating reference year for GDP calculation	Can revise growth & size
<b>GDP Deflator</b>	Measures inflation in GDP	Used in real GDP calculation

- **Q. Consider the following statements regarding GDP rankings:**

- IMF ranks countries based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) GDP
- Exchange rate fluctuations affect nominal GDP rankings
- India is currently 3rd largest economy in PPP terms

# Adani overtakes Ambani to become Asia's richest person

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi, April 17

**GAUTAM ADANI HAS** overtaken fellow Gujarat business czar Mukesh Ambani to become Asia's richest person, as a sustained rally in shares of his ports-to-energy conglomerate lifted his net worth.

With a net worth of \$92.6 billion, Adani surpassed Ambani, whose fortune stands at \$90.8 billion, to become the richest person in India and Asia, according to the latest billionaire rankings.

Adani is currently ranked 19 on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, which tracks the world's 500 richest individuals and is updated daily.

Adani's wealth is largely derived from his shareholdings across the group's 10 listed companies. A recent surge in Adani Group stocks has added billions of dollars in market value, underscoring strong investor appetite for assets linked to India's economic expansion and



With a net worth of \$92.6 bn, **Gautam Adani** surpassed Mukesh Ambani, whose fortune stands at \$90.8 bn

energy transition. By contrast, Ambani's wealth, anchored by his flagship conglomerate Reliance Industries that spans energy, telecom and retail, has seen comparatively modest gains, reshuffling the region's billionaire rankings.

Adani and Ambani are the only Indians in the top 50. Ambani had consistently been India's richest for over a decade before Adani's eye popping gains in company stock prices catapulted him to the top spot in February 2022.

# A quiz on International Day of Human Space Flight, observe

## V.V. Ramanan

### QUESTION #1

On that date, 65 years ago, Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space. What was the name of his spacecraft and what Russian word meaning 'Let's go!' or 'We're off!' did he utter that has become a tradition among Russian spacepersons.

### QUESTION #2

What space first was achieved by cosmonaut Alexei Leonov on March 18, 1965?

### QUESTION #3

Name the cosmonaut who holds the record for the longest single,

uninterrupted human spaceflight at 437 days and 18 hours.

### QUESTION #4

What is the 'Karman Line' (named after Hungarian-American engineer and physicist Theodore von Karman) in the context of space exploration?

### QUESTION #5

Going to space once is a big achievement. Jerry Ross and Franklin Chang-Diaz hold the record for most spaceflights. How many?

### QUESTION #6

Name the Chinese-built space station that is the only live space station apart from the ISS.



**Visual question:** Name the Indian Air Force officer seen with Rakesh Sharma who served as the backup cosmonaut in 1984? FILE PHOTO

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# Word of the day

**Askance:** with suspicion or disapproval

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**Synonyms:** warily, skeptically,  
doubtfully

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**Usage:** *The teacher looked askance at  
his excuse.*

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

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**International Phonetic  
Alphabet:** /əskɑːns/

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# तैयारी सब karte hai पर **Select** कुछ ही होते है !

What is the Right Strategy ?

**RAS UNLOCKED**  
**FREE SEMINAR**

19<sup>th</sup> April  
11:00 AM

Specially for *English*  
*Medium Aspirants*



RASonly Near Riddhi-Siddhi, Jaipur



9057143412



Thank you 😊