

# Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता



The Indian EXPRESS

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS



3  
**The Hindu**



0  
**PIB, PRS & Other newspaper**



2  
**The Indian Express**

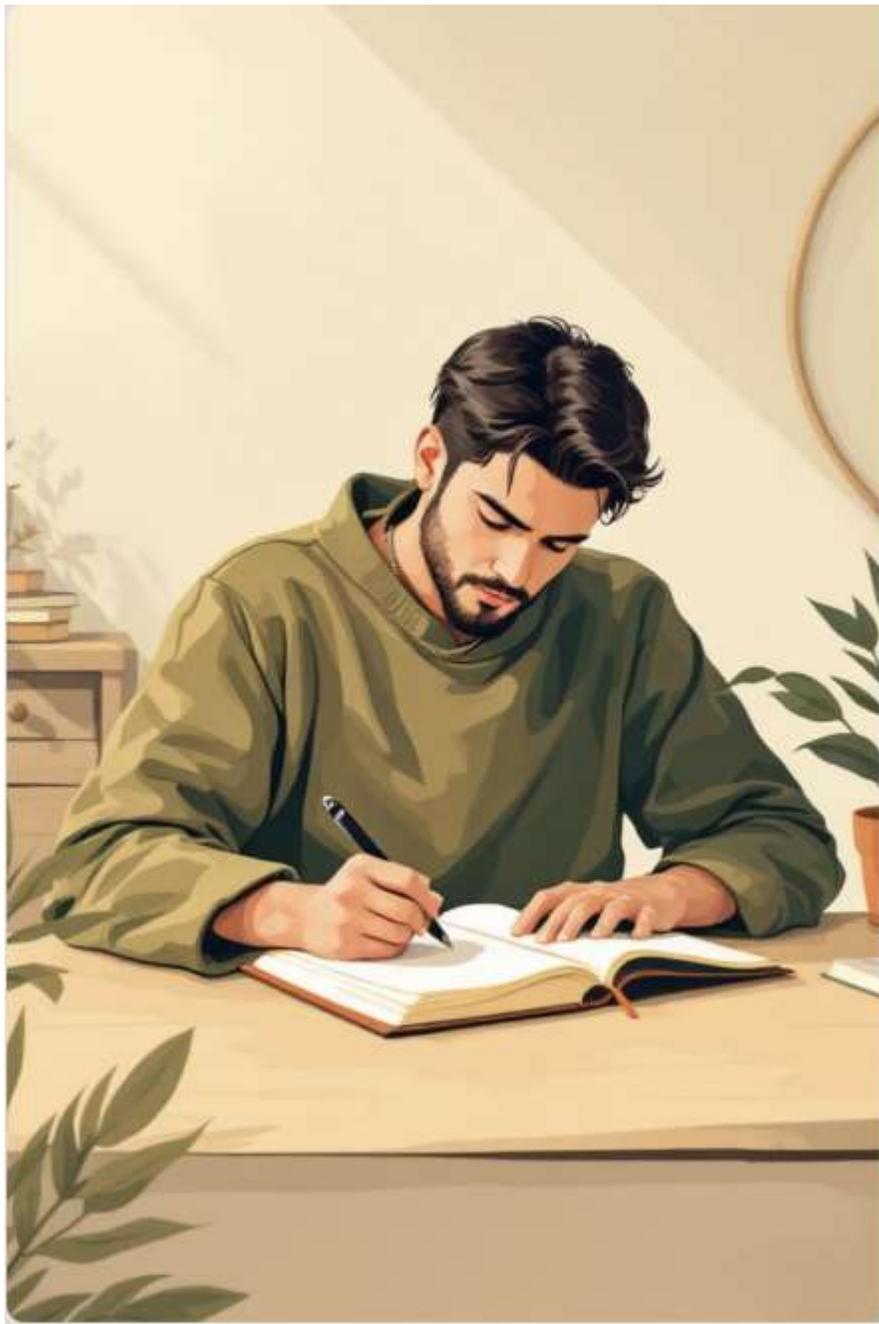


0  
**Jansatta**



2  
**Financial Express**





"You don't need perfect conditions —just a stubborn decision that you won't quit."

**1** India to Sign U.S. Trade Deal Only After Clarity on Tariff Rates

Economy | IR

**2** Importance of Sex Education in Academia

Social Issues | Health

**3** Are 40 Out of 100 Children Malnourished in Gujarat?

Social Issues | Health

**4** EU & UN Discussing Initiative for Hormuz Strait

International Relations

**5** 'One Battle After Another' Wins Oscar — 98th Academy Awards

Awards | Culture

**6** World Bank \$300 Million Loan for UP Clean Air Program

Environment | Economy

**7** Belisgarh Fort — Ancient Heritage of Bihar

Art & Culture | History



# India to sign U.S. deal only after clarity on rates

Any deal must be weighed against tariff structure and comparative advantage, says senior official

U.S. court ruling against tariffs hadn't come when govt. said deal will be signed in March, adds official

However, Commerce Secretary maintains India is engaged with U.S. for a mutually beneficial deal

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan  
NEW DELHI

India will sign a trade deal with the U.S. only after the country settles its "tariff architecture" and clarifies country-wise tariff rate, sources in the government have said.

"Any deal that we finalise and sign has to be seen against the tariff structure or comparative advantage that India gets in the U.S. market," a senior official in the Ministry of Commerce said. "The U.S. is working on trying to recreate a tariff architecture globally. If they are able to finalise that, at that juncture it would be right to sign the deal," the official said.

This comes against the backdrop of two trade-related investigations the U.S. is carrying out that could potentially see additional tariffs being levied on a number of countries,

## Tariff travails

In 2025, U.S. imposed 25% reciprocal tariffs on India. An additional 25% linked to import of Russian oil was later imposed taking total tariffs to 50%. A timeline of events thereafter:

■ **Feb. 6, 2026:** India and the U.S. issue a statement on framework on interim pact

■ Additional 25% Russian oil-linked tariff removed (**Tariff on India: 25%**)

■ **Feb. 20:** U.S. SC strikes down reciprocal tariffs

■ **Feb. 24:** U.S. imposes

10% tariff on all countries for 150 days. **Tariff on India: 10%**

■ **Mar. 11-12:** USTR launches probe which could lead to additional tariffs

■ **Mar. 16:** Govt. sources say deal will only be signed after U.S. finalises tariffs on India and other countries

including India.

Meanwhile, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said that India remains engaged with the U.S. on a trade deal.

"Pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court judgment dated February 20, 2026 invalidating reciprocal tariffs, the reciprocal tariffs are no longer in force," Mr. Agrawal told presspersons

on Monday. "The U.S. government has issued Executive Orders imposing 10% tariffs pursuant to Section 122 of the Trade Act, 1974 on certain products from all countries," he added. "India remains engaged with the U.S. side for a mutually beneficial trade agreement," he said.

India and the U.S. announced a trade deal on

## India's trade deficit stands at \$4 billion in Feb.

NEW DELHI

India's trade balance stood at a deficit of about \$4 billion in February compared with a surplus of \$2.7 billion a year earlier due in large part to merchandise exports staying flat while imports of both merchandise and services grew significantly during the month. » PAGE 12

February 2 and a joint statement on the finalisation of a framework for the deal was released on February 7. At the time, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal had said that the deal would be signed in March.

The U.S. Supreme Court on February 20 ruled against the validity of U.S. President Donald Trump's

use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to levy reciprocal tariffs on America's trade partners. It is after this that the U.S. imposed the 10% tariffs on all its trade partners under Section 122 of the Trade Act, 1974. These tariffs are in force for a period of 150 days from February 24.

"The U.S. deal was to be signed in March. When we said this, at that time the Supreme Court judgement on IEEPA tariffs had not come," the official explained. "Now with the Supreme Court judgement on IEEPA tariffs, the tariffs per se don't exist."

Additionally, over the course of March 11-12, the U.S. Trade Representative initiated two separate investigations into the U.S.' trade partners under Section 301 of the Trade Act, 1974. If the findings of these investigations war-

ranted it, the U.S. can impose additional tariffs on particular countries.

Under the framework announced by the two countries, the U.S. was to impose an 18% tariff on most goods imported from India. Now, the new rate will depend on the rates the U.S. imposes on India's competitors.

"Depending on how their tariff architecture settles, that will determine where India will land," the official said. "In case all others are at 19%, 20%, 21%, 22%, then India will remain at 18%. But if others come down, then India will also come down. That is something for the U.S. also to take a call on."

### On Russian oil

Mr. Agrawal also highlighted that the U.S.' removal of tariffs on India is linked to its import of Russian oil.

"On February 7, 2026,

the 25% additional ad-valorem tariffs imposed by the U.S. on certain Indian exports citing India's imports of Russian oil were removed," Mr. Agrawal noted.

Following the start of the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the U.S. Treasury Department issued an order to "allow" India to import oil from Russia, a concession it later expanded to all countries.

"On petroleum, whether we are buying it at a premium [from Russia], the Petroleum Ministry would be the right forum to answer it in detail," Mr. Agrawal said.

He said, "But we do monitor the import data and we can say that we are buying Russian oil and there has been an increased buying of Russian oil in the current month because of the challenges we are facing."

---

# Tariff travails

In 2025, U.S. imposed 25% reciprocal tariffs on India. An additional 25% linked to import of Russian oil was later imposed taking total tariffs to 50%. A timeline of events thereafter:

■ **Feb. 6, 2026:** India and the U.S. issue a statement on framework on interim pact

■ Additional 25% Russian oil-linked tariff removed (**Tariff on India: 25%**)

■ **Feb. 20:** U.S. SC strikes down reciprocal tariffs

■ **Feb. 24:** U.S. imposes

10% tariff on all countries for 150 days. **Tariff on India: 10%**

■ **Mar. 11-12:** USTR launches probe which could lead to additional tariffs

■ **Mar. 16:** Govt. sources say deal will only be signed after U.S. finalises tariffs on India and other countries



## 1. Core Issue / मुख्य मुद्दा

- India will sign trade deal with U.S. **only after clarity on tariff structure**  
भारत केवल तब ही अमेरिका के साथ व्यापार समझौता करेगा जब टैरिफ संरचना स्पष्ट होगी
  - Focus is on **comparative advantage & market access**  
ध्यान तुलनात्मक लाभ और बाजार पहुंच पर है
- 

## 2. Tariff Developments Timeline / टैरिफ घटनाक्रम

- U.S. imposed **25% reciprocal tariffs (Feb 2025)**  
अमेरिका ने 25% पारस्परिक टैरिफ लगाया
- **Additional 25% linked to Russian oil imports**  
रूसी तेल आयात से जुड़े अतिरिक्त 25% टैरिफ
- Later total tariffs reached **~50%**  
कुल टैरिफ लगभग 50% तक पहुँचा
- U.S. imposed **10% universal tariff (150 days)**  
अमेरिका ने 10% सार्वभौमिक टैरिफ लागू किया
- U.S. Supreme Court struck down some tariffs  
अमेरिकी सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने कुछ टैरिफ को निरस्त किया

### 3. India's Position / भारत का दृष्टिकोण

- Deal must ensure **fair competition vs other countries**  
समझौता अन्य देशों के मुकाबले न्यायसंगत प्रतिस्पर्धा सुनिश्चित करे
  - India evaluating **tariff architecture globally**  
भारत वैश्विक टैरिफ ढांचे का मूल्यांकन कर रहा है
  - India engaged for **mutually beneficial agreement**  
भारत पारस्परिक लाभकारी समझौते के लिए वार्ता में है
- 

### 4. Trade Deficit Data / व्यापार घाटा

- India's trade deficit: **\$4 billion (Feb 2026)**  
भारत का व्यापार घाटा: **4 अरब डॉलर**
- Earlier surplus due to exports, now imports rising  
पहले निर्यात के कारण अधिशेष था, अब आयात बढ़ने से घाटा

## 5. U.S. Strategy / अमेरिकी रणनीति

- Use of IEEPA (International Emergency Economic Powers Act)  
IEEPA कानून के तहत टैरिफ लगाना
  - Section 122 (Trade Act 1974) → temporary tariffs  
Trade Act 1974 की धारा 122 → अस्थायी टैरिफ
  - Target: **protect domestic industries & pressure partners**  
उद्देश्य: घरेलू उद्योग संरक्षण व व्यापारिक दबाव
- 

## 6. Russian Oil Factor / रूसी तेल कारक

- U.S. tariffs linked to **India importing Russian oil**  
टैरिफ भारत के रूसी तेल आयात से जुड़े
- Later relaxation allowed imports  
बाद में कुछ छूट दी गई
- India maintains **energy security priority**  
भारत के लिए ऊर्जा सुरक्षा प्राथमिकता

## ⚡ Key Facts to Remember

---

- Comparative Advantage: Produce goods at lower opportunity cost — Ricardo's theory
- India & U.S. bilateral trade: ~\$130 billion (2024–25)
- India's major exports to U.S.: Pharmaceuticals, IT, Textiles, Gems
- USTR: United States Trade Representative — key trade policy body
- India is NOT in RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership)
- WTO Dispute Settlement Body: Resolves trade disputes between nations
- IMF & World Bank both founded: 1944, Bretton Woods Conference, New Hampshire

## ⚡ Key Facts to Remember

---

- POCSO Act (2012): Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
- NIPCCCD: National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development — under WCD Ministry
- NALSA Judgment (2014): SC recognised transgender persons as 'third gender'
- Transgender Persons Act: Passed 2019, prohibits discrimination
- Right to Education Act (2009): Compulsory education for 6–14 years
- UGC: University Grants Commission — regulates higher education in India
- SDG Goal 3: Good Health & Wellbeing | SDG Goal 4: Quality Education

## Importance of sex education in academia

Sexuality, intimacy, and mental health are closely linked yet heavily stigmatised, resulting in a culture of silence, shame and fear surrounding sex and intimacy that exacerbate mental health issues. The WHO has stated that "Immense suffering can occur when people lack bodily autonomy, control over their fertility or the freedom to experience safe, consensual and satisfying sexual relationships". In 2023, the Supreme Court emphasised the need for comprehensive sex education programmes in order to promote open discussions about intimacy and sexual health.

As German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) fellows between Germany and India, the authors' classroom experiences of teaching about the diversity of human sexualities, in both contexts, found that there is a need to resist and challenge the marginalisation, invisibilisation and declassification of lived intimacies in higher educational institutions. Deeply ingrained social stigmas, taboos and taboos about intimate relationships are perpetuated in academia, evidenced by the minuscule number of courses and discussions on the topic. Academics often promote a culture of resistance, fear and anxiety over informed exchange and empowering discourse, particularly in the light of increasing student suicides in India. By positioning a biomedical approach as well as rigiditarian norms, higher educational spaces disregard the dimension of pleasure and the impact of socio-cultural and oppressive factors on intimate experiences.

**Lack of proper vocabulary** in India, the curricula health curriculum is often found to be non-informative and unempowered without accounting for sexual marginalisation and human diversity. Sexuality is limited to heterosexual dysfunction, erasing

**Anusha Strauss**  
Lecturer, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Münster, Germany

**Sudeshan B. Kottal**  
Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Palakkad, Kerala

**By creating diversity-aware and compassionate learning environments, students can develop the tools to navigate contemporary challenges and create a more inclusive, equitable, and just world**

topics such as consent and sexual politics, framing it as a medical issue alone. Complex lived realities and the structural violence faced by queer people are excluded, sidelining the development of cultural and structural competencies required for effective clinical practice. As a consequence, sexual minorities often experience institutional discrimination and inaccessibility to the provision of support when they access counselling services. With psychologists being increasingly appointed to universities to deal with suicide and mental health problems in India, such ethical and epistemic gaps fail to reckon with oppressive institutional contexts. It diminishes the capacity of mental health professionals to initiate transformative structural change oriented on sexuality, gender and relationship equality.

**Exercises to open up** Addressing sensitive topics such as mental health, violence, and intimacy in higher educational settings comes with particular social stigma, abuse and taboos, screening that took place at the University of Münster in Germany highlighted by the minuscule number of courses and discussions on the topic. Academics often promote a culture of resistance, fear and anxiety over informed exchange and empowering discourse, particularly in the light of increasing student suicides in India. By positioning a biomedical approach as well as rigiditarian norms, higher educational spaces disregard the dimension of pleasure and the impact of socio-cultural and oppressive factors on intimate experiences.

**By creating diversity-aware and compassionate learning environments, students can develop the tools to navigate contemporary challenges and create a more inclusive, equitable, and just world**

personal perspectives on topics. By answering questions like "What does intimacy mean to you?", students can connect the course material to their own lives and experiences. Such an approach emphasises the need for instructors to foster a classroom environment that builds trust, rapport, and open communication among participants.

**Inclusive classrooms** Education should harness the diversity within classrooms and transcend rote knowledge transfer and workforce training, aiming instead to cultivate critical thinking and awareness. This is particularly urgent in today's context, where anti-dominant movements seek to erase and marginalise the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals, promoting a narrow and exclusionary view of sexuality and intimacy. Furthermore, it is crucial to address the growing mental health concerns affecting young people, who face immense pressure from family expectations, societal demands, and the weight of outdated gender roles. The Supreme Court sought responses from the government on integrating transgender-inclusive comprehensive sexuality education into school curricula. In the same year, the Court issued pair-judges guidelines to address mental and emotional health issues among students in which gender and sexual orientation figured as reasons for discrimination at higher educational institutions. By creating diversity-aware and compassionate learning environments, students can develop the tools to navigate contemporary challenges and create a more inclusive, equitable, and just world.

**Long-term game plan** After falling short of the majority mark in the previous assembly election, the Congress created a major rethink, equalling, and just world. Fostering allyship and care communities within educational institutions should take precedence over short-term electoral goals. Instead of hiring professionals or facilitating isolated events or workshops, long-term group discussions and conversation of support system.

## Gaining inroads into each other's bastions

Both the national parties, while tightening their hold, are keen to look beyond

**STATE OF PLAY**

**Ashok Kumar**  
ashok.kumar@hindu.in

The Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) picks for the two seats in the Rajya Sabha on March 16 were predictable, as it was driven by caste calculations. The elections were consolidated due to BJP leaders - Kiran Choudhary, a Jat, and Ram Charidar Jaaga, belonging to the Backward Classes (BCs) - completing their respective terms in the Upper House. However, this time, the BJP chose to nominate Rajay Bharti, a Punjabi, in an effort to consolidate its Jat-vote bank, and to tighten the grip over its regional bastion, the 'GT Road belt', a swath of constituencies across the National Highway 91B-84. The Congress too stuck to its Jat-BC-Muslim formula, nominating Karamvir Boudh, who is from a Scheduled Caste (SC). Even as the two national parties, which had finished neck-and-neck in the 2024 Assembly polls, vie to firmly hold on to their vote banks and regional strongholds in the State, they have also unleashed political battles to make inroads into each other's traditional bastions.

The BJP, for its part, thriving on a non-Jat and BC vote bank, has gradually increased its political outreach towards Muslims, who are the dominant group in at least five Assembly seats such as Nuh, Purnoma, Farooqabad, Bahain and Ishtana. Over the past decade, Hindu nationalist have increased their activities in the Non-Muslim dominated Nuh district, in December 2022, a 10-day 'Vandh

the core vote bank of the ruling BJP led by Chief Minister Nayab Saini, who also belongs to the BCs, but is also trying to breach the saffron party's south Haryana fortress - the 'Yakals', categorised as BCs in Haryana, and largely settled across the Gurugram-Rewari-Mahendragarh - belt, have supported the BJP since 2004, playing a key role in the party's success in the five-year win in the State elections. With the appointment of Mr. Singh, an Ahr leader, the BJP hopes to cash in on the post-poll rivalry between the BJP's two Ahr stalwarts, Union Minister of State Rao Indrajit Singh and Haryana Environment Minister Rao Narbir Singh, to re-establish their hold over the Congress. As part of its strategy, the party is set to hold a State-level youth conference in Jind's Narwana on March 23 and organise several meetings in Nuh.

Attempting to revive the Jan Loknayak Janta Party too, led by Ajay Chautala, held a rally in the agricultural region of Hansi. Hansi is considered a bastion of the saffron party. Even as political parties in the State seek to chip away at each other's vote banks, the BJP stands to benefit the most with the tug-of-war between the two Chautala-led factions and the Congress for the Jat vote bank, who form one-fifth of the total electorate.

Attending to the BJP, for its part, thriving on a non-Jat and BC vote bank, has gradually increased its political outreach towards Muslims, who are the dominant group in at least five Assembly seats such as Nuh, Purnoma, Farooqabad, Bahain and Ishtana. Over the past decade, Hindu nationalist have increased their activities in the Non-Muslim dominated Nuh district, in December 2022, a 10-day 'Vandh

Attending to the BJP, for its part, thriving on a non-Jat and BC vote bank, has gradually increased its political outreach towards Muslims, who are the dominant group in at least five Assembly seats such as Nuh, Purnoma, Farooqabad, Bahain and Ishtana. Over the past decade, Hindu nationalist have increased their activities in the Non-Muslim dominated Nuh district, in December 2022, a 10-day 'Vandh

## Are 40 out of 100 children malnourished in Gujarat?

Data indicates that the statement is true and that there is a higher burden of malnutrition among the tribal communities of the State

**DATA POINT**

**Devyashree Bhatnagar**

On March 12, child malnutrition in Gujarat became the subject of a debate in the Legislative Assembly. During a discussion on the budgetary demands of the Women and Child Development Department, Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani stated that, "despite BJP government...having more than 180 seats and 26 years of rule, only one figure comes out round, that 40 out of 100 children are malnourished. A very large section of them are tribal".

Women and Child Development Minister Manisha Vakil replied that the depiction was relying on figures from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019-21) and asked members to "update your knowledge". Ms. Vakil told the Assembly that, according to the Poshan Tracker system, "only 11.4% of children in Gujarat" were malnourished as of January 2026.

**Different methods** The Poshan Tracker and the NFHS cannot be directly compared as they use different methods. The NFHS is a sample-based household survey conducted on a representative population, while the Poshan Tracker is a real-time monitoring system under Mission Poshan 2.0 that records growth data for children registered at anganwadis or at least enrolled at anganwadis. We do not know how complete the information is. NFHS is on the other hand is supposed to be representative of the entire population (including children who do not go to anganwadis)," said Environment Health Khena. The two datasets cover different populations and use different methods and

their figures are not strictly comparable. "We do not know to what extent one can take Poshan Tracker data at face value. Anganwadi workers are under pressure to keep data entry on the Tracker updated and they might or might not reflect the child's actual weight and height," she added.

The latest publicly available Poshan Tracker data is for July 2025, and provides separate figures for stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height) and underweight (low weight for age) rather than a single composite malnutrition percentage. It shows that about 32.7% of children are stunted, 7.2% were wasted and 16.4% were underweight in Gujarat (Chart 1). Among 86 States and Union Territories, the State ranks 21st in stunting and 13th in both wasting and underweight, placing it in the process performers bracket among States in key malnutrition indicators.

Poshan Tracker data for July 2025 shows that several States in central and eastern India rank near the bottom on these indicators. Bihar (9.3%), Chhattisgarh (7.7%) and Madhya Pradesh (6.1%) are among the worst performers in wasting, while Andhra Pradesh (24.4%) records the highest proportion of underweight children. In the case of stunting, Uttar Pradesh (48.8%) has the highest prevalence, followed by Jharkhand, Assam, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, each with more than 42% of children found to be stunted. In contrast, States such as Goa, Odisha, Manipur, Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu rank among the better performers, reporting lower levels of stunting, wasting and underweight.

**Verifying the claim** NFHS-5 (2019-21) is the latest round of the nationally representa-

tive survey on health and nutrition released so far, as the results for NFHS-6 (scheduled for 2023-24) are yet to be published. In NFHS-5, 30% of children under the age of five in Gujarat are underweight, 29.1% were wasted, and 39.7% were underweight. NFHS-5 does not report a single overall malnutrition percentage and those indicators are widely used to assess child malnutrition. The corresponding national averages were 30% for stunting, 19.4% for wasting and 32.1% for underweight (Chart 2). Stunting and underweight levels are both close to 40%, so the statement that around "40 out of 100 children" are malnourished is consistent with NFHS findings, depending on which indicator is used.

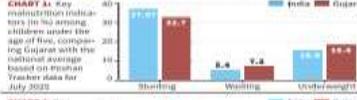
Mr. Mevani also said that "a large proportion of them belonged to tribal communities". District level figures based on NFHS-5 show that several of the worst performing districts are among those identified as tribal districts by the Tribal Development Department of the Gujarat government (Table 3).

In the case of stunting, four of the five worst affected districts included 55.2% stunted children (Jalpaiguri (48.6%), Namsai (47.2%) and Panchmahal (47.1%) are tribal districts. Wasting shows a similar pattern, with the Dang (46.9%) and the two tribal districts, Panchmahal (35.7%) and Sabarkantha (33.3%) also ranking among the highest, all of them tribal districts. In the case of underweight, all five of the worst affected districts are tribal districts. The Dang (53.7%) and Madhya Pradesh (48.4%) are among the highest, all of them tribal districts.

The claim that about 40% of children in Gujarat are malnourished is thus supported by NFHS-5 data, which shows that stunting and underweight levels are close to 40%. District level data also shows that several of the worst affected districts are tribal districts, pointing to a higher burden of malnutrition in tribal communities.

## Scale of malnutrition

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) and Rajya Sahaja Question and Answers.



**TABLE 3: Top 5 worst performing districts in Gujarat based on malnutrition indicators (NFHS-5)**

District	Stunting (%)	Wasting (%)	Underweight (%)
Jalpaiguri	48.6	36.7	48.1
Namsai	47.2	31.1	31.8
Panchmahal	47.1	35.7	33.3
Aravalli	47.1	21.0	47.0
Yamunotri	46.9	21.0	47.0

**TABLE 4: Top 5 best performing districts in Gujarat based on malnutrition indicators (NFHS-5)**

District	Stunting (%)	Wasting (%)	Underweight (%)
Banswara	35.0	28.0	44.1
Vidya	31.0	21.0	31.0
The Dangs	27.0	21.0	31.1
Sabarkantha	33.0	31.1	41.0
Narsara	30.0	21.0	31.0

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 17, 1976

### A stamp not officially released

Mangalore, March 15: A stamp of Param Vir Chakra not officially issued by Postal Department, but stated to have leaked out prematurely, has become the star attraction in Manipalgarh 76, the first ever district-level Philatelic Exhibition held here between March 12 and 14, sponsored by the P and T department.

The 25-paise commemorative stamp was to have been officially released by the P and T department on last Republic Day but was postponed, and the definite date of release is not fixed yet.

Meanwhile, the stamp has been issued from some post offices in the country and one stamp bearing a postmark of a post office in Tamil Nadu on Feb. 17 was on display from out of the collections of Dr. K. S. Prabhakara Rao, Founder President of the Philatelic Association of South Kanara, was also among those who has one such Param Vir Chakra stamp having been defaced on March 12 from Belgum.

Leading philatelists who are attending the exhibition differ in their views regarding the philatelic value of such prematurely issued stamps.

### A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 17, 1926

### Broadcasting Parliament debates

London, March 15: In the Commons, replying to Mr. Campbell with regard to the broadcasting of proceedings of certain State legislatures of the United States, Viscount Womans said he had seen reports that proceedings of Japanese Diet were broadcast last December and the proceedings of United States Senate were frequently broadcast. He had no information with regard to the results.

Mr. Agnew asked for an assurance that the "radio in Parliament" would be the father of broadcasting from Parliamentary viewpoint. (Cries of No.) Mr. Pym (Conservative) humorously declared that the medical profession had expressed opinion that there would be an outbreak of sleep sickness if Mr. Agnew (Laughter)

# Importance of sex education in academia

**S**exuality, intimacy, and mental health are closely linked yet heavily stigmatised, resulting in a culture of silence; shame and fear surrounding sex and intimacy can exacerbate mental health issues. The WHO has stated that "immense suffering can occur when people lack bodily autonomy, control over their fertility or the freedom to experience safe, consensual and satisfying sexual relationships". In 2024, the Supreme Court emphasised the need for comprehensive sex education programmes in order to promote open discussions about intimacy and sexual health.

As German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) fellows between Germany and India, the authors' classroom experiences of teaching about the diversity of human sexualities, in both contexts, found that there is a need to resist and challenge the marginalisation, invalidation and disenfranchisement of lived intimacies in higher educational institutions. Deeply ingrained social stigmas, silence and taboos about intimate relationships are perpetuated in academia, evidenced by the minuscule number of courses and discussions on the topic. Academia often promotes a culture of resistance, fear and anxiety over informed exchange and empowering discourse, particularly in the light of increasing student suicides in India. By prioritising a biomedical approach as well as majoritarian norms, higher educational spaces disregard the dimension of pleasure and the impact of socio-cultural and oppressive factors on intimate experiences.

## **Lack of proper vocabulary**

In India, the mental health curriculum is often found to be heteronormative and cisgendered without accounting for sexual marginalisation and human diversity. 'Sexuality' is limited to heterosexual dysfunctions, erasing



**Annika Strauss**

Lecturer, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Muenster, Germany



**Sudarshan R. Kottai**

Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Palakkad, Kerala

By creating diversity-aware and compassionate learning environments, students can develop the tools to navigate contemporary challenges and create a more inclusive, equitable, and just world

topics such as consent and sexual politics, framing it as a medical issue alone. Complex lived realities and the structural violence faced by queer people are erased, inhibiting the development of cultural and structural competence required for effective clinical practice. As a consequence, sexual minorities often experience institutional discrimination and inadequacies in the provision of support when they access counselling services. With psychologists being increasingly appointed in universities to deal with suicide and mental health problems in India, such ethical and epistemic gaps fail to reckon with oppressive institutional contexts. It diminishes the capacity of mental health professionals to initiate transformative structural change oriented on sexuality, gender and relationship equality.

## **Exercises to open up**

Addressing sensitive topics such as mental health, violence, and intimacy in higher educational settings comes with particular challenges. A workshop and film screening that took place at the University of Münster in Germany featuring a filmmaker who uses unconventional pornography as a form of sex education highlighted some of the difficulties. While appreciating the effort to tackle the issue, students found themselves uneasy during the discussion. Was it appropriate to open up about one's own experiences, or was it safer to maintain a detached, impersonal, and abstract tone, as is often expected in academic settings?

The authors' interactions with students in India and Germany highlighted the importance of creating safer and accountable spaces when teaching sensitive topics. To achieve this, innovative approaches at the beginning of each class can help. Instead of diving straight into theory and methodology, icebreaker exercises and small-group discussions encourage students to share their

personal perspectives on topics. By answering questions like 'What does intimacy mean to you?', students can connect the course material to their own lives and experiences. Such an approach emphasises the need for instructors to foster a classroom environment that builds trust, rapport, and open communication among participants.

## **Inclusive classrooms**

Education should harness the diversity within classrooms and transcend mere knowledge transfer and workforce training, aiming instead to cultivate critical thinking and awareness. This is particularly urgent in today's context, where anti-democratic movements seek to erase and marginalise the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals, promoting a narrow and exclusionary view of sexuality and intimacy.

Furthermore, it is crucial to address the growing mental health concerns affecting young people, who face immense pressure from family expectations, societal demands, and the weight of multiple global crises. In 2025, the Supreme Court sought responses from the government on integrating transgender-inclusive comprehensive sexuality education into school curricula. In the same year, the Court issued pan-India guidelines to address suicide and mental health issues among students in which gender and sexual orientation figured as reasons for discrimination at higher educational institutions. By creating diversity-aware and compassionate learning environments, students can develop the tools to navigate contemporary challenges and create a more inclusive, equitable, and just world. Fostering allyship and care communities within educational institutions should take precedence over short-term fixes such as hiring more mental health professionals or facilitating isolated events or workshops, without creating a sustained conversation or support system.

## 1. Core Idea / मुख्य विचार

- Sexuality, intimacy & mental health are **deeply interconnected but highly stigmatized**  
यौनिकता, अंतरंगता और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य आपस में जुड़े हैं लेकिन अत्यधिक कलंकित हैं
  - Lack of discussion leads to **silence, shame, fear & mental health issues**  
चर्चा की कमी से चुप्पी, शर्म, डर और मानसिक समस्याएँ बढ़ती हैं
- 

## 2. Need for Sex Education / यौन शिक्षा की आवश्यकता

- WHO: Lack of bodily autonomy → mental suffering  
WHO: शारीरिक स्वायत्तता की कमी → मानसिक कष्ट
- Supreme Court (2024): Need for **comprehensive sex education**  
सुप्रीम कोर्ट (2024): समग्र यौन शिक्षा आवश्यक
- Helps promote **safe, consensual and healthy relationships**  
यह सुरक्षित, सहमति आधारित संबंधों को बढ़ावा देता है

### 3. Issues in Academia / अकादमिक क्षेत्र की समस्याएँ

#### (a) Social Stigma / सामाजिक कलंक

- Silence & taboo around intimacy  
अंतरंगता पर चुप्पी और वर्जना
  - Minimal courses on sexuality  
यौनिकता पर बहुत कम पाठ्यक्रम
- 

#### (b) Structural Problems / संरचनात्मक समस्याएँ

- Heteronormative & cisgender curriculum  
पाठ्यक्रम हेटेरोनॉर्मेटिव और सिसजेंडर केंद्रित
  - Ignoring LGBTQ+ experiences  
LGBTQ+ अनुभवों की अनदेखी
  - Institutional discrimination  
संस्थागत भेदभाव
- 

#### (c) Mental Health Crisis / मानसिक स्वास्थ्य संकट

- Rising student suicides  
छात्रों में आत्महत्या के मामले बढ़ रहे हैं
- Lack of inclusive counselling  
समावेशी काउंसलिंग की कमी

---

#### 4. Lack of Proper Vocabulary / उचित शब्दावली की कमी

- Sexuality reduced to **biological or medical problems**  
यौनिकता को केवल जैविक समस्या तक सीमित किया जाता है
- Missing concepts: consent, identity, politics  
सहमति, पहचान, राजनीति जैसे विषय गायब

---

#### 5. Teaching Challenges / शिक्षण चुनौतियाँ

- Students feel **uneasy discussing personal experiences**  
छात्र व्यक्तिगत अनुभव साझा करने में असहज
- Academic culture prefers **detached, impersonal discussion**  
अकादमिक संस्कृति में औपचारिक और दूरी बनाए रखने का रुझान

## 6. Solutions & Recommendations / समाधान

### (a) Safe Learning Spaces / सुरक्षित वातावरण

- Build trust, rapport, open communication  
विश्वास, संवाद और सुरक्षित माहौल
- Encourage sharing experiences  
अनुभव साझा करने के लिए प्रेरित करना

### (b) Innovative Teaching / नवाचारपूर्ण शिक्षण

- Icebreakers & small group discussions  
आइसब्रेकर और समूह चर्चा
- Workshops, films, interactive tools  
कार्यशालाएँ, फिल्में, इंटरैक्टिव माध्यम

### (c) Inclusive Education / समावेशी शिक्षा

- Include LGBTQ+ perspectives  
LGBTQ+ दृष्टिकोण शामिल करना
- Focus on critical thinking, not just knowledge transfer  
केवल जानकारी नहीं, बल्कि आलोचनात्मक सोच

### (d) Policy Level Changes / नीतिगत सुधार

- Integrate gender-inclusive curriculum  
जेंडर-समावेशी पाठ्यक्रम
- Address mental health systematically  
मानसिक स्वास्थ्य का संस्थागत समाधान



## Historical / ऐतिहासिक

- Sex education globally started in early 20th century (Europe)  
यौन शिक्षा 20वीं सदी में यूरोप से शुरू
- India: Adolescent Education Programme (2005)  
भारत: किशोर शिक्षा कार्यक्रम (2005)

## Political / राजनीतिक

- Debate between **cultural values vs modern rights**  
सांस्कृतिक मूल्य बनाम आधुनिक अधिकार
- Courts pushing for **progressive reforms**  
न्यायालय प्रगतिशील सुधार को बढ़ावा दे रहे

## Economic / आर्थिक

- Better sex education → **lower healthcare costs**  
बेहतर यौन शिक्षा → स्वास्थ्य खर्च में कमी
- Improves productivity & workforce wellbeing  
कार्यक्षमता और उत्पादकता में वृद्धि

## Social / सामाजिक

- Reduces gender violence & discrimination  
लैंगिक हिंसा में कमी
- Promotes equality & inclusivity  
समानता और समावेशन को बढ़ावा



**Q. Consider the following statements:**

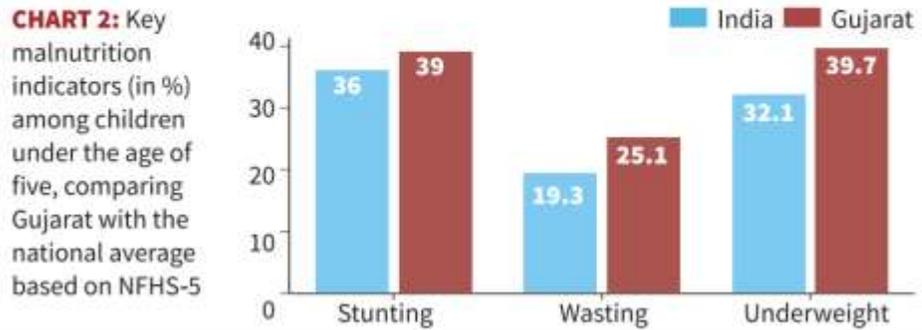
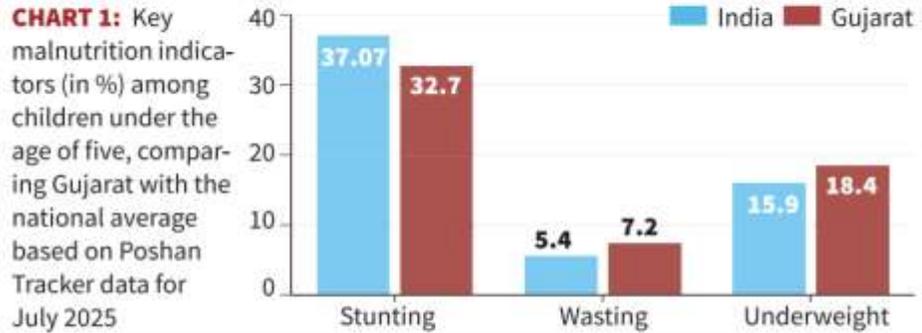
Sex education in academia mainly focuses on biological aspects only.

Inclusive sex education helps address mental health issues among students.

Heteronormative curriculum excludes diverse sexual identities.

# Scale of malnutrition

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) and Rajya Sabha Question and Answers



**TABLE 3:** Key malnutrition indicators (in %) among children under the age of five, across selected districts of Gujarat based on NFHS-5 with all the districts included identified as **tribal districts**

District	Stunted	Wasted	Underweight
Dahod	55.3	27.8	53
Chhota Udaipur	48.6	28.4	48.1
Narmada	47.2	23	52.8
Panchmahal	47.1	35.7	51.9
Aravali	47.1	29	47.2
Tapi	41.7	36.6	51.8
Bharuch	40.9	24.5	45.5
Banaskantha	39	25.5	44.1
Valsad	37.8	23.2	34.8
The Dangs	37.6	40.9	53.1
Sabarkantha	37	33.1	41
Navsari	36.8	29	43.6
Surat	36.1	26	32.5

Debate in Gujarat  
Assembly on **child  
malnutrition levels**

एक घण्टे के दौरान 40 बच्चों को  
असुखी बताया गया

Claim: **40 out of 100  
children malnourished**

हर 100 बच्चों में 40 को  
असुखी बताया गया

## 2. Government vs Opposition Data / सरकार बनाम विपक्ष डेटा

### (a) Opposition (NFHS Data) / विपक्ष (NFHS डेटा)

- Based on **NFHS-5 (2019–21)**  
NFHS-5 (2019–21) पर आधारित
- Gujarat figures:
  - Stunting: **39%** (लंबाई कम)
  - Wasting: **25.1%** (कम वजन-लंबाई)
  - Underweight: **39.7%** (कम वजन)

👉 Indicates **high malnutrition burden (~40%)**

👉 लगभग **40%** कुपोषण का संकेत

---

### (b) Government (Poshan Tracker) / सरकार (पोषण ट्रैकर)

- Real-time system under **Poshan Mission 2.0**  
पोषण मिशन 2.0 के तहत रियल-टाइम डेटा
- Gujarat (Jan 2026):
  - Malnutrition: **11.4% only**

👉 Shows **much lower estimate**

👉 बहुत कम कुपोषण दिखाता है

### 3. Why Data Conflict? / डेटा में अंतर क्यों?

#### (a) Methodology Difference / पद्धति अंतर

- NFHS → Sample survey (representative population)  
NFHS → सैंपल सर्वे
  - Poshan Tracker → Anganwadi-based real-time data  
पोषण ट्रैकर → आंगनवाड़ी आधारित डेटा
- 

#### (b) Coverage Issues / कवरेज समस्या

- NFHS covers **all children (including non-anganwadi)**  
NFHS सभी बच्चों को कवर करता है
  - Poshan Tracker covers **registered children only**  
पोषण ट्रैकर केवल पंजीकृत बच्चों को कवर करता है
- 

#### (c) Data Reliability Issues / डेटा विश्वसनीयता

- Anganwadi workers face **technical & workload issues**  
आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ताओं पर दबाव
- Possible inaccurate data entry  
डेटा प्रविष्टि में त्रुटि संभव

## 4. Gujarat's Ranking / गुजरात की स्थिति

- Stunting rank: **21st**
- Wasting & Underweight: **31st (poor performance)**

👉 Key takeaway: Gujarat is **not among best performers**

👉 गुजरात शीर्ष राज्यों में नहीं है

---

## 5. National Comparison / राष्ट्रीय तुलना

- India averages:
  - Stunting: **36%**
  - Wasting: **19.3%**
  - Underweight: **32.1%**

👉 Gujarat worse than national average in many indicators

👉 गुजरात कई मामलों में राष्ट्रीय औसत से खराब

## 6. Regional Pattern / क्षेत्रीय पैटर्न

### Worst affected (Tribal districts) / सबसे प्रभावित (जनजातीय जिले)

- Dahod, Narmada, Panchmahal, Tapi, Dang
- Tribal population → higher malnutrition

👉 Tribal areas show **systemic deprivation**

👉 जनजातीय क्षेत्रों में अधिक कुपोषण

---

## 7. State-wise Comparison / राज्यों की तुलना

### Worst performers / खराब प्रदर्शन

- Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh

### Better performers / बेहतर प्रदर्शन

- Goa, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh

Indicator

Meaning

श्रावह

Stunting

Low height for age

क्ष-□ ड्डः१ श्रुवघ ड्रख  
च्रावह

Wasting

Low weight for height

च्रावह ड्डः१ श्रुवघ ड्रख  
अन् ष

Underweight

Low weight for age

क्ष-□ ड्डः१ श्रुवघ ड्रख  
अन् ष

## Historical / ऐतिहासिक

- India launched **ICDS (1975)**  
ICDS कार्यक्रम 1975 में शुरू
  - **POSHAN Abhiyaan (2018)**  
पोषण अभियान 2018
- 

## Economic / आर्थिक

- Malnutrition → reduces GDP by **2–3%**  
कुपोषण से GDP में 2–3% कमी
- 

## Social / सामाजिक

- Linked with **poverty, sanitation, education of mother**  
गरीबी, स्वच्छता और मातृ शिक्षा से जुड़ा
- 

## Political / राजनीतिक

- Major issue in **state elections & welfare policies**  
चुनावी और कल्याणकारी मुद्दा

**Q. Consider the following statements:**

NFHS provides real-time data on malnutrition.

Poshan Tracker covers only children enrolled in anganwadi centres.

Wasting refers to low height for age

WASHINGTON Trump says he has 'absolute right' to charge tariffs in another form



U.S. President Donald Trump said on Sunday he had the authority to impose duties despite the U.S. Supreme Court last month striking down his global tariffs. "I have the absolute right to charge TARIFFS in another form, and have already started to do so," he said in a long post on his Truth social platform. AP

HAVANA Cuba announces total electricity blackout amid U.S. oil blockade



A power outage struck the entire island of Cuba on Monday, the state-owned electric company said. The latest blackout at the United States punishes its oil blockade in a bid to pressure the island's government. The cuts resulted from a "complete shutdown of the national grid," Union Nacional Electrica de Cuba said. AP

KHOSR Afghanistan regime says three children, woman killed in Pakistan shelling



Three children and a woman were killed by Pakistan shelling in eastern Afghanistan overnight last Sunday and Monday, Afghan officials said. In total, 18 civilians have been killed in Afghanistan in the past week as a result of cross-border clashes between the two sides, according to the Afghan authorities. AP

JERUSALEM Israel police say shrapnel from missiles fell in Jerusalem holy sites



Israeli police said they found missile and interceptor fragments at holy sites in Jerusalem's Old City on Monday, including areas near the Al-Aksa mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. "During the recent missile salvo fired from Iran toward Jerusalem, several intercepts occurred over the city," the police said. AP

'EU, UN discussing initiative for Hornuz Strait'

U.S. President Donald Trump had called on NATO allies and other countries to assist in forcibly opening the Strait Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the UK 'will not be drawn into a wider war'. A German government spokesperson said, "This war has nothing to do with NATO, it's not NATO's war". Italy's government says it is not at war with anyone

Straitan Lohelmann

The EU is in discussion with the UN on a Black Sea Grain initiative type arrangement to open up the Strait of Hormuz, according to its top diplomat Kaja Kallas. The strait, a waterway for a fifth of the world's oil supply, has been virtually closed by Iran following a conflict in the region which began after Israel said the U.S. struck Iran on February 28, sending oil prices soaring to above \$100 per barrel.

The Strait with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. The Black Sea initiative, facilitated by the UN and Turkey, sought to ensure the safe export of grain and fertilizer from Ukraine's ports after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022. Ms. Kallas pointed out that 85% of that oil that goes through the Strait of Hormuz is destined for Asia, and that the blocking of the Strait was also impacting fertilizer production and wheat and food shortages next year if the strait isn't opened up.



European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas speaks during a press conference. AP

had said he was "very sceptical" of using another option was to form a "Coalition of the Willing" to open the Strait. "...We will discuss with Member States whether it is possible to really change the mandate of this mission. The point is that the Member States are willing to actual-

ise use this mission," she said, adding that a third option was to form a "Coalition of the Willing" to open the Strait. U.S. President Donald Trump had called on NATO allies and other countries to assist in forcibly opening the Strait, telling the *Financial Times* on Sunday that it would be "very bad" for the future of NATO if allies did not help the U.S. in opening the passage.

The easing of U.S. sanctions on Russia was a "dangerous precedent", Ms. Kallas said, adding that the closure of the Strait of Hormuz was to Russia's benefit, helping it to fund its war with Ukraine. New Delhi has also been in talks with Tehran regarding the safety of Indian vessels passing through the Strait. European leaders remain sceptical of using another option was to form a "Coalition of the Willing" to open the Strait.

households facing rising energy costs. Referring to the British opposition earlier, Mr. Starmer said "They would have rushed the U.K. heading into this war, without the full picture of what they were sending our forces into and without a plan to get us out." Mr. Starmer said a diplomatic solution was needed once the armed conflict ended, "to constrain the threat posed by Iran" which he suggested lay with Tehran's ability to renege on its nuclear programme, pose a ballistic missile threat and to arm proxy militias. "This war has nothing to do with NATO. It's not NATO's war," German government spokesperson Stefan Kretzschmar said on Monday.

The U.S. and Israel did not consult Europe before the war, Mr. Kretzschmar said. "Italy is not at war with anyone and sending military ships in a war zone would mean entering the war," Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini said, as per news agency Reuters. France, like the U.K., has emphasised that it is not at war with anyone in the region but it offers to support the UN initiative to open the Strait of Hormuz, French President Emmanuel Macron said on Sunday he had spoken to Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, and conveyed that France was only taking "strictly defensive" actions to protect its assets in the region and its regional partners and that it was unacceptable for France to be targeted.

Iran defiant as strikes hit Gulf transport, energy hubs

Agence France-Presse TEHRAN

Iran said it was ready to take the West Asia war "as far as necessary", as it launched strikes across the region on Monday. "By now they have... understood what kind of nation they are dealing with, one that does not hesitate to defend itself and is ready to continue the war wherever it may lead, and take it as far as necessary," Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told presspersons in Tehran. A drone sparked a fuel tank fire near Dubai airport, disrupting travel, while a missile killed a civil plane in the car in Abu Dhabi, and another drone sparked a blaze in the emirate of Bahrain.

Mounting toll



Deadly devastation in Zaporizhzhia by to put out a fire at a private house following a Russian drone attack in Zaporizhzhia on Monday. Three persons were killed in the overnight strike in Ukraine. AP

'Israel doesn't seek perpetual war with Iran'

Subhasini Haldar NEW DELHI

Israel is not seeking a "perpetual war" with Iran, and would discuss a diplomatic way out of the war if Iran "changes course" said Keivan Azar, Israel's ambassador to India. He, however, denied that Israel's goals had changed due to Tehran's retaliatory strikes. Addressing a press conference here at the war which came in its third week, Mr. Azar said there was no timeline on ending the war, but that the U.S. and Israel, which jointly launched the war with strikes killing Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei on February 26, had

anticipated it lasting a "few weeks". The comments came as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar reached Brussels for a meeting with his EU counterparts and held talks with EU Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen. He said in an interview that his talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi had "yielded some results" in the safe passage of two LNG-laden ships through the Hormuz Strait, and that he hoped more would follow. "If it is voluntary with Iran yielding results for us, I would naturally continue to look at the *Financial Times*. "Certainly, from



Keivan Azar

India's perspective, it is better that we reason and we continue and we get a solution than we do," he added, suggesting that the world would be "better off" with a similar approach. Referring to the comments by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Mr.

Azar claimed that Israel too "supports" diplomacy, and that Israel was in touch with all countries in the region. "We are not here to do a perpetual war... we can have a diplomatic way out of this if the Iranians decide that they want to cooperate with the international community," he said, suggesting that one option would be that the U.S. and Israel would "find a balance between military targets", and then return "to the table". The Iranian foreign minister has said it would not accept talks or a ceasefire at present, accusing the U.S. of destroying the dialogue process by attacking Iran even as negoti-

ators were due to meet for a second round of talks. When asked by *The Hindu* about whether his comments denoted a change of stance by Israel, given that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had earlier spoken of bringing a regime change, he said "The situation of this operation haven't changed a bit... Of course, when our region is being attacked, there is an urge to defend the region, and we have been playing a role in hunting these drones and missiles that are not only launched against us, but are launched against our partner in the region," he said.

Sri Lanka announces four-day work week

The Hindu Bureau COLOMBO

Sri Lanka on Monday announced a four-day working week - declaring Wednesday off - for government institutions, schools, and universities, to conserve fuel as the escalating tensions in West Asia threaten a severe energy crisis. Addressing a media conference in Colombo, the Commissioner General of Essential Services also encouraged the private sector to consider the option of a long-term contribution for Mr. Anderson, an American singer of political resistance.

One Battle After Another wins Oscar, in coronation for Paul Thomas Anderson

Associated Press LOS ANGELES

Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another* won crowned best picture at the 98th Academy Awards, handing Hollywood's top honours to a comic, multi-generational American saga of political resistance. The ceremony on Sunday, which also saw Michael B. Jordan win best actor and Simone cinemographer Autumn Durald Arkapov make Oscar history as the first female director of picture to win the award, was a long-incoming coronation for Mr. Anderson, an Oregon-born indie filmmaker who made his first short at age 18 and has been one of America's most beloved filmmakers for decades. Before Sunday, Mr. Anderson had never won an Os-



Director Paul Thomas Anderson and cast members of *One Battle After Another* pose after winning the Oscar on Sunday. AP

car. But *One Battle After Another*, the favourite coming in, won six Oscars, including best director and best adapted screenplay. "I wrote this movie for my kids to say sorry for the housekeeping mess that we're handing off to them," said Mr. Anderson while accepting the screenplay trophy. "But also with the encouragement that they will be the generation that hopefully brings us some common sense and decency." Google's Bill Gross said, "I've soaked vampire tale *Barbaric*, which came in with a record 16 nominations, also landed some big awards, including best horror film. "I wrote this movie for my kids to say sorry for the housekeeping mess that we're handing off to them," said Mr. Anderson while accepting the screenplay trophy.

the widely loved filmmaker, won the first Oscar in an unblemished career that started out with Mr. Jordan in 2001's *Fruitvale Station*. Mr. Anderson won the Best Picture Oscar for his first feature film, *Punch Drunk Love*, in 2005. He has since won four more Oscars, including Best Picture for *Lulu* in 2014, Best Director for *There is Always Time for Love* in 2017, Best Picture for *Licence to Kill* in 2020, and Best Picture for *There is Always Time for Love* in 2023. "I really want all the women in room to thank me," said Ms. Arkapov. "Because I don't feel like I get the credit for this movie. I really want all the women in room to thank me." Ms. Arkapov said she was "honored" to be nominated for Best Picture. "I really want all the women in room to thank me," said Ms. Arkapov. "Because I don't feel like I get the credit for this movie. I really want all the women in room to thank me." Ms. Arkapov said she was "honored" to be nominated for Best Picture.

Trump says 'we're talking' to Iran but it is not 'ready' for deal

Agence France-Presse WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Sunday that the United States was in discussions with Iran at the war rates its third week but that Tehran was not ready for a deal to end it. "Yes, we're talking to Iran," Trump said in a press conference aboard Air Force One. "We're talking to Iran, but it's not ready for a deal to end it. Yes, we're talking to Iran," Trump said in a press conference aboard Air Force One. "We're talking to Iran, but it's not ready for a deal to end it. Yes, we're talking to Iran," Trump said in a press conference aboard Air Force One.



Donald Trump

were taking place. Mr. Trump also said that NATO faces a "very bad" situation if U.S. allies fail to help open the Strait of Hormuz. In a brief interview with *The Financial Times*, Mr. Trump said that as the United States has ended the war with Iran, he expects Europe to help on the Strait of Hormuz, which closure has sent energy prices soaring.

Israel begins 'ground operations' in Lebanon

Agence France-Presse JERUSALEM

The Israeli military said on Monday it had begun what it described as "limited ground operations" against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, with Defence Minister Israel Katz warning that those displaced would not return home until northern Israel was secure. "In recent days, IDF troops from the 101st division have begun limited and targeted ground operations against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, with Defence Minister Israel Katz warning that those displaced would not return home until northern Israel was secure." "In recent days, IDF troops from the 101st division have begun limited and targeted ground operations against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, with Defence Minister Israel Katz warning that those displaced would not return home until northern Israel was secure."

# *One Battle After Another* wins Oscar, in coronation for Paul Thomas Anderson

**Associated Press**

LOS ANGELES

Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another* was crowned best picture at the 98th Academy Awards, handing Hollywood's top honour to a comic, multi-generational American saga of political resistance.

The ceremony on Sunday, which also saw Michael B. Jordan win best actor and *Sinners* cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw make Oscar history as the first female director of photography to win the award, was a long-in-coming coronation for Mr. Anderson, a San Fernando Valley native who made his first short at age 18 and has been one of America's most lionised filmmakers for decades. Before Sunday, Mr. Anderson had never won an Os-



Director Paul Thomas Anderson and cast members of *One Battle After Another* pose after winning the Oscar on Sunday. AFP

car. But *One Battle After Another*, the favourite coming in, won six Oscars, including best director and best adapted screenplay for Mr. Anderson, the Oscars' first trophy for best casting and best supporting actor for an absent Sean Penn.

"I wrote this movie for my kids to say sorry for the housekeeping mess that we left in this world – we're handing off to them,"

said Mr. Anderson while accepting the screenplay trophy. "But also with the encouragement that they will be the generation that hopefully brings us some common sense and decency."

Ryan Coogler's *Jim Crow-set*, blues-soaked vampire tale *Sinners*, which came in with a record 16 nominations, also landed some big and even historic wins. Mr. Coogler,

the widely loved filmmaker, won the first Oscar in an unblemished career that started out with *Mr. Jordan* in 2013's *Fruitvale Station*.

Ms. Arkapaw was also the first Black person to win for best cinematography. Only the fourth female cinematographer ever nominated, her win was a long-in-coming triumph for women behind the camera.

"I really want all the women in room to stand up," said Ms. Arkapaw. "Because I don't feel like I get here without you guys."

Jessie Buckley won best actress for her performance as Agnes Shakespeare in *Hamnet*, making her the first Irish performer to ever win in the category.

Amy Madigan won best supporting actress for her performance in the horror thriller *Weapons*.

- Film **"One Battle After Another"** won **Best Picture at 98th Academy Awards**  
फिल्म **"One Battle After Another"** ने 98वें अकादमी अवॉर्ड्स में सर्वश्रेष्ठ फिल्म जीती
  - Marks first Oscar win for **director Paul Thomas Anderson**  
निर्देशक **पॉल थॉमस एंडरसन** का पहला ऑस्कर
- 

## 2. Major Wins / प्रमुख पुरस्कार

### (a) Film Awards / फिल्म पुरस्कार

- Best Picture → *One Battle After Another*  
सर्वश्रेष्ठ फिल्म → *One Battle After Another*
- Won total **6 Oscars**  
कुल **6 ऑस्कर जीते**
- Best Director & Adapted Screenplay → Paul Thomas Anderson  
सर्वश्रेष्ठ निर्देशक व अनुकूलित पटकथा → **पॉल एंडरसन**

## (b) Acting Awards / अभिनय पुरस्कार

- Best Actor → **Michael B. Jordan**  
सर्वश्रेष्ठ अभिनेता → माइकल बी. जॉर्डन
  - Best Actress → **Jessie Buckley (Hamnet)**  
सर्वश्रेष्ठ अभिनेत्री → जेसी बकली
  - Best Supporting Actress → **Amy Madigan (Weapons)**  
सर्वश्रेष्ठ सहायक अभिनेत्री → एमी मैडिगन
- 

## (c) Technical & Historic Wins / तकनीकी व ऐतिहासिक उपलब्धियाँ

- Cinematography → **Autumn Durald Arkapaw**  
सिनेमैटोग्राफी → ऑटम ड्यूराल्ड अर्कापाव
  - 👉 First **Black person** to win in this category
  - 👉 इस श्रेणी में पहली अश्वेत विजेता
  
  - 👉 Only **4th woman ever nominated**, historic gender milestone
  - 👉 केवल चौथी महिला नामांकित, ऐतिहासिक उपलब्धि
-

### 3. Other Notable Film / अन्य प्रमुख फिल्म

- *Sinners* (Ryan Coogler)
    - 16 nominations (record-level)
    - Multiple wins
- 

### 4. Themes of Winning Film / विजेता फिल्म के विषय

- Political resistance  
राजनीतिक प्रतिरोध
  - Multi-generational American story  
बहु-पीढ़ी अमेरिकी कहानी
  - Social justice narrative  
सामाजिक न्याय का दृष्टिकोण
- 

### 5. Key Statements / महत्वपूर्ण कथन

- Anderson: Film dedicated to **future generation & responsibility**  
एंडरसन: फिल्म भविष्य की पीढ़ी के लिए
- Emphasis on **common sense & decency**  
सामान्य समझ और नैतिकता पर जोर

### (a) About Oscars / ऑस्कर के बारे में

- Started in **1929**  
1929 में शुरू
  - Organized by **Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS)**  
AMPAS द्वारा आयोजित
- 

### (b) Indian Context / भारतीय संदर्भ

- First Indian Oscar: **Bhanu Athaiya (1983)**  
पहला भारतीय ऑस्कर
  - Recent wins: *RRR (2023)*, *The Elephant Whisperers*  
हाल की जीत
- 

### (c) Political Angle / राजनीतिक पहलू

- Films increasingly reflect **identity politics & social justice**  
फिल्में अब पहचान और सामाजिक न्याय दर्शाती हैं

**Q. Consider the following statements:**

“One Battle After Another” won Best Picture at the 98th Academy Awards.

Autumn Durald Arkapaw became the first Black cinematography Oscar winner.

Oscars are organized by UNESCO.

# One Battle After Another sweeps Oscars with 6 awards



Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas made a stylish return to the Academy Awards stage, presenting an award at the 98th Oscars ceremony held at the Dolby Theatre



Bollywood legend Dharmendra was conspicuously absent from the 'In Memoriam' segment

**PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON'S** *One Battle After Another* was crowned best picture at the 98th Academy Awards, handing Hollywood's top honour to a comic, multi-generational American saga of political resistance.

The film won a total of six Oscars.

The ceremony saw Michael B Jordan win best actor and *Sinners* cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw make Oscar history as the first female director of photography to win the award.

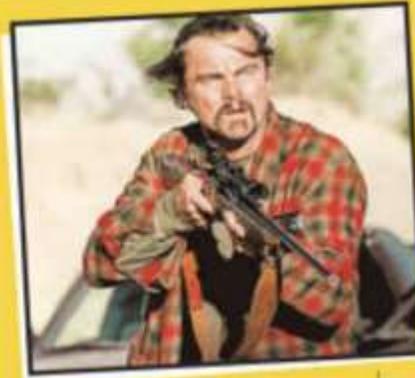


**Best Actress**

**Jessie Buckley**  
(*Hamnet*)

**Best Actor**

**Michael B Jordan**  
(*Sinners*)



**Best Picture**

***One Battle After Another***

**Best Supporting Actress**  
**Amy Madigan** (*Weapons*)

**Best Supporting Actor**  
**Sean Penn** (*One Battle After Another*)

**Best Director**

**Paul Thomas Anderson** (*One Battle After Another*)

**Best Original Song**

**Golden from KPop Demon Hunters, EJAE, Mark Sonnenblick, Joong Gyu Kwak, Yu Han Lee, Hee Dong Nam, Jeong Hoon Seon and Teddy Park**

**Best Original Score**

**Ludwig Goransson** (*Sinners*)

**Best Animated Film**

**KPop Demon Hunters**

**Best International Film**

**Sentimental Value**



World Bank \$300 Million Loan for UP  
Clean Air Program

Aspect	Details	शुद्धी
Scheme Name	Uttar Pradesh Clean Air Management Program	दुष्प्रदूषण रोकथाम कार्यक्रम
Funding Agency	World Bank	शुद्धी
Loan Amount	~\$300 million (USD 299.66 million)	लगभग 300 अरब डॉलर
Date	March 2026	मार्च 2026
Objective	Improve air quality across sectors	व्यभिचार सुधार
Coverage	Entire Uttar Pradesh	पूरा उत्तर प्रदेश
Sectors Covered	Transport, Industry, Agriculture, Household	परिवहन, उद्योग, कृषि, गृह

Sector	Measures	क्षेत्र
Transport	Electric buses, EV 3-wheelers	सूचना के माध्यम से सार्वजनिक परिवहन और 3-चालीय वाहनों को बढ़ावा देना
Industry	Emission monitoring, cleaner tech	वायु प्रदूषण को नियंत्रित करने के लिए निगरानी और स्वच्छ तकनीक का उपयोग करना
Agriculture	Efficient fertilizer use	कृषि में उच्च गुणवत्ता वाले खादों का उपयोग करना
Household	Clean cooking solutions (3.9 million homes)	स्वच्छ रसोई के समाधानों का उपयोग करना (39 करोड़ घरों में)
Brick Kilns	Transition to cleaner tech (700+)	700+ स्वच्छ रसोई के समाधानों का उपयोग करना

Feature

Details

स्मर्रघर्

Loan Type

World Bank  
Assistance

स्मर्र ङ्ङ् ढ्णर्रर्र

Maturity

10 years

10 ङ्ङ्

Grace Period

2 years

2 ङ्ङ्

Additional  
Investment

~\$150 million  
private sector

150 स्मर्रर्रर्र र्र्रर्र  
स्मर्र स्मर्र



# WORLD BANK GROUP



The World Bank Group building (Washington, D.C.)

<b>Established</b>	4 July 1944; 81 years ago
<b>Type</b>	<a href="#">Intergovernmental organization</a>
<b>Legal status</b>	Treaty
<b>Purpose</b>	<a href="#">Economic development, poverty elimination</a>
<b>Headquarters</b>	1818 H Street Northwest, <a href="#">Washington D.C., U.S.</a> <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Membership</b>	189 states (188 <a href="#">UN countries</a> and <a href="#">Kosovo</a> ) <sup>[6]</sup> - see <a href="#">List of World Bank members</a>
<b>President</b>	<a href="#">Ajay Banga</a> <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>MD &amp; CFO</b>	<a href="#">Anshula Kant</a> <sup>[3]</sup>

Institution	Year	Full Form / Role	Key Function	शुभचरु
IBRD	1944	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	Provides loans to middle-income & creditworthy low-income countries	रुवुरुवु ग अरुवुवुवुवुवुवु क र् वुवुवुवु
IDA	1960	International Development Association	Provides concessional loans & grants to poorest countries	णघह वुवुवुवुवुवुवु वुवु वुवु क र् अ १ वुवुवुवु
IFC	1956	International Finance Corporation	Promotes private sector investment in developing countries	अरुवु वुवु वुवुवुवु वुवु वुवु वुवुवुवु वुवु वुवुवुवु
ICSID	1965	International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes	Resolves investment disputes between investors & states	अरुवु वुवुवुवुवुवु वुवुवुवुवुवु
MIGA	1988	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency	Provides political risk insurance to investors	अरुवु वुवुवुवु वुवु वुवुवुवु वुवुवुवु वुवुवुवु

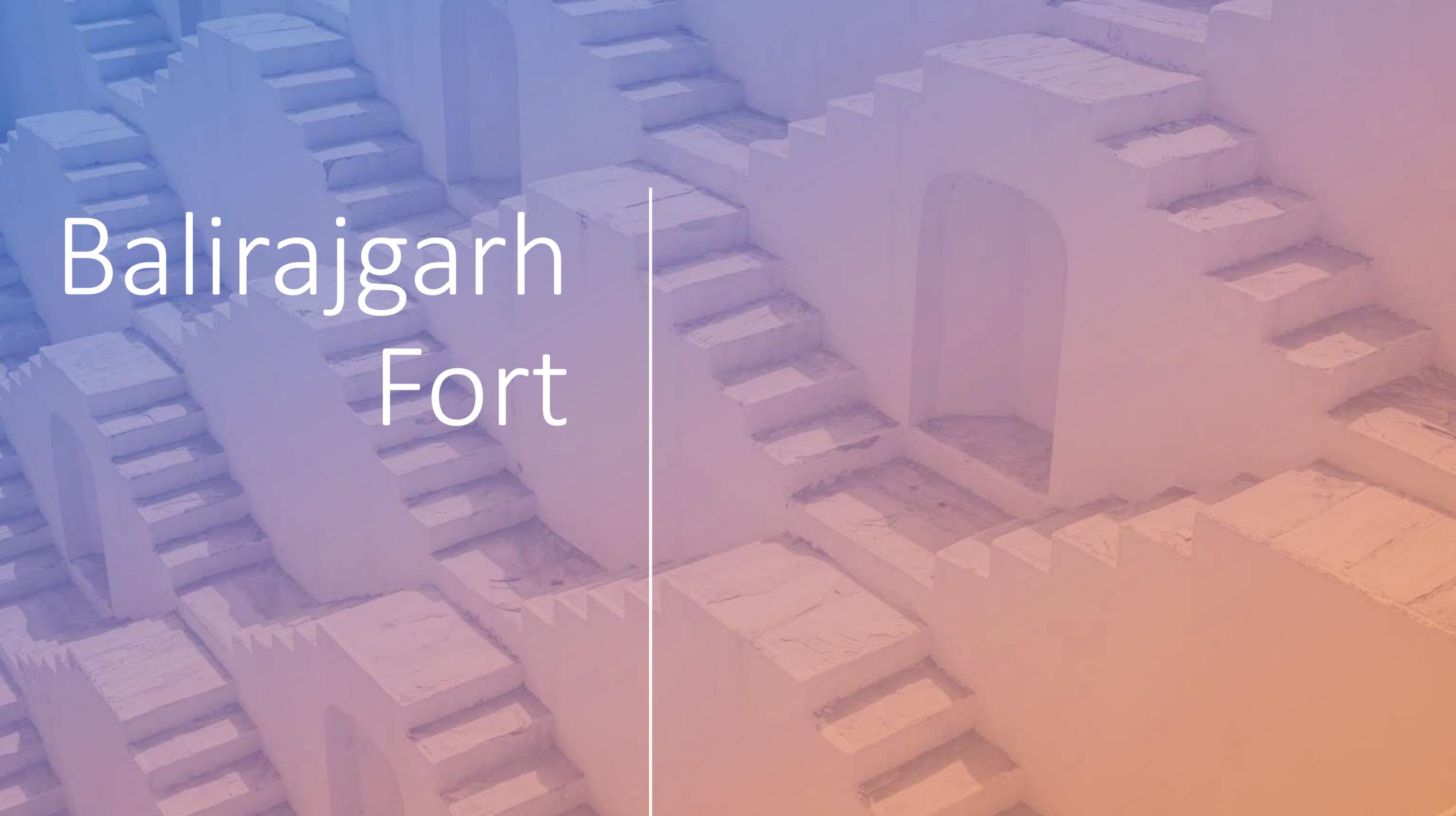
Aspect	IBRD	IDA	IFC	ICSID	MIGA
Type	Lending Institution	Concessional Arm	Private Sector Arm	Arbitration Body	Insurance Agency
Target	Middle-income countries	Poorest countries	Private companies	Investors vs States	Foreign investors
Loan Type	Market-based loans	Low-interest/interest-free	Equity + Loans	No loans	Guarantees
Focus	Infrastructure, development	Poverty reduction	Private investment	Dispute settlement	Risk mitigation
Funding Source	Global capital markets	Donor contributions	Member countries	Member fees	Premiums

**Q. Consider the following statements:**

The UP Clean Air Program is funded by the Asian Development Bank.

The program includes installation of around 200 air monitoring stations.

Indo-Gangetic Plain is one of the most polluted regions globally.

An aerial photograph of Balirajgarh Fort, showing its complex stone architecture and multiple levels of stepped platforms. The image is overlaid with a color gradient that transitions from a light blue on the left to a warm orange on the right. A vertical white line is positioned in the center of the image, separating the two color zones. The text 'Balirajgarh Fort' is written in a white, sans-serif font on the left side, partially overlapping the blue gradient.

# Balirajgarh Fort





Aspect	Details	शुभ्ररु
Name	Balirajgarh Fort	शुभ्ररु ँ प्र शु चर
Location	Madhubani district, Bihar	रुशु शु चर, शुभ्ररु
Other Name	Remains of Ancient Fort of Garh	शुभ्ररु ँ प्र शु १ शुभ्ररु
Authority	Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)	शुभ्ररु शुभ्ररु शुभ्ररु
Status	Centrally Protected Monument	शुभ्ररु शुभ्ररु शुभ्ररु
ASI Circle	Patna Circle	शुभ्ररु शुभ्ररु

Aspect

Details

शुक्रघर्

Time Period

Around 200 BCE

चणकण 200 दद्वर हल्ल

Region

Mithila Region

शुक्रचर ल्द

Mythological Link

Associated with  
King Bali

घन्र ँश्रच द्दुद्वर

Cultural Phase

Shunga Period  
(major phase)

द्वर इव्रच

Phase	Period	समय
NBPW Culture	700–200 BCE	क्षेत्रज्ञ इव च ह्यत्र अत्र रविः द्वयम्
Shunga Period	~200 BCE	क्षेत्रज्ञ इव च
Kushan Period	1st–3rd CE	क्षेत्रज्ञ इव च
Gupta Period	4th–6th CE	क्षेत्रज्ञ इव च
Pala Period	Up to 12th CE	क्षेत्रज्ञ इव च

## Archaeological Features / पुरातात्विक विशेषताएँ

Feature	Details	विवरण
Structure	Massive fortification walls	विशाल किलेबंदी
Pottery	NBPW pottery found	NBPW मृदांड
Settlement	Major urban centre	प्रमुख शहरी केंद्र
Geography	Elevated mounds	ऊँचे टीले
Defense	Defensive structures present	रक्षात्मक संरचनाएँ

## Excavation History / उत्खनन इतिहास

Aspect	Details	विवरण
First Identified	1884 (George A. Grierson)	1884 में खोज
Excavations	1962-63, 1972-73, 2013-14	उत्खनन वर्ष
Issues	High water table, environmental constraints	जल स्तर व पर्यावरण समस्या
Latest Update	ASI approved fresh excavation	ASI ने नया उत्खनन मंजूर किया

**Q. Consider the following statements:**

Balirajgarh Fort is located in Uttar Pradesh.

The site shows cultural continuity from NBPW to Pala period.

It is protected by ASI.

---

# Word of the day

## **Chide:**

censure severely or angrily

---

**Synonyms:** scold, reproach, rebuke

---

**Usage:** *The teacher chided the students for talking in class.*

---

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

---

**International Phonetic**

**Alphabet:** /tʃaɪd/

---

# Keep Learning, Keep Growing! 🚀

*"You don't need perfect conditions — just a stubborn decision that you won't quit."*

1 India–U.S. Trade Deal  
& Tariff Clarity

2 Sex Education  
in Academia

3 Child Malnutrition  
in Gujarat

4 EU–UN Initiative  
for Hormuz Strait

5 98th Oscar Awards  
One Battle After Another

6 World Bank \$300M  
UP Clean Air Program

7 Balirajgarh Fort  
Bihar Heritage



Thank you 😊