Daily Current Affairs



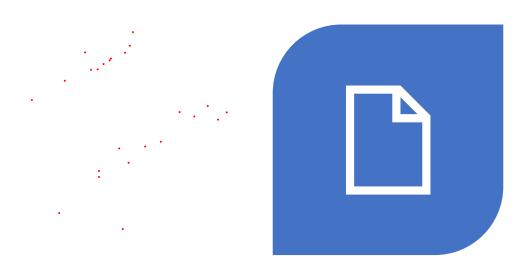








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10 MCQ QUIZ

 "Rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my **life."** – J.K. Rowling



PLANS FOR POLLS Myanmar junta ends state of emergency WORLD - PAGE 14





Can ICJ make nations pay for past emissions? Its recent landmark ruling raises question Marine Committee of the Committee of the



Karun rescues India on a rain-hit first day SPORT - PAGE 10

INSIDE



INDIA bloc to step up protests

The MORA lates parties, or an amanumus stendard stendard at their modeling or Thursday, resulted to interestly their protests against the ongoing special intentive sevenon (1991) of electron's roll in Dilar, both inaide and outside the Parliament or PAGE 5

Former T.N. CM Panneerselvam leaves the NDA

Former Tamii Nadu Chief Minister and former AMUMIL anordinator Q. Perineerselve on Thursday exited the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and terminated his rotationahip with the BUP. Late in the day, he met Tanui Nadu Chief Mereater M.K. Stalin on Changas is code a

Pak. court jails 200 supporters of Imran Khan

professional an Oppo sentenced an Opposition leader out rearly 200 supposition to leader out rearly 200 suppositions of impelsanced former PM immer Minar to 10 years in prison each user the 2022 rick that empted over Minars arrost, officials and, the cent arrounced the vertical against 100 people. The Changes stemmed from the May 9, 2023 orderse that

growing closeness with Pa-leistan over trade issues in the aftermath of the Pahal-



SC recalls judgment for BPSL liquidation BUSINESS IS PAGE AS

India a 'bright spot', says govt. amid Trump tirade

U.S. President lashes out at India on ties with Russia, membership of 'anti-American' BRICS, high tariffs concluded a deal to develop massive oil reserves cites deals with UAE, U.K., Australia, and EFTA

T.C.A. Sharad Baghayan

ndia and Russis could "take their dead eco-"Take their dead exa-nomine down togeth-er", U.S. President Donald Trump and among a bur-rage of statements target-ing India on Thursday, a day before the 25% tariffs annument wil lessian im-ports by tha U.S. are set to take officer.

However, countering fr. Trump's statement, commerce and industries Minister Piyush Goyal said india is being seen as an sconomic "bright spot" in the world.

In statements on social tedia and then white peaking to presspersons of the White House, Mr. yump lashed out at todia for its the with Russia, membership of the "anti-American" BRICS, high isriffs, "massive" trade defi-cit with the U.S., and for imposing the "most streng-ous and obnoxious nontion to the Commerce Ministry statements. The U.S. is expected to nonetary trude barriers of

The U.S. is expected to orar leaving duties as part of its 'Liberation Day' (a riffs on impose from econ-tries around the world from Priday. The Centres said it was examining the impact of the 25% tariffs as well as undefined penulties for in-dia's energy imports from Rusis. Energy trade with tran
The U.S. State Department
The U.S. State Department
componies and five Indian
nationals for involvement
is sensy freals with from
moureed that the U.S. and
pakistan had concluded a
deal whereby the two
when the continued a
deal whereby the two
or of developing their
massive oil reservers, in
communion with the U.S.

Russia.
In a see more statement
in Farliament on Thursday,
Mr. Goyal said the government has been meeting
domestic stateholders,
"Including exporters and industry", to assess the im-pact of the new tariffs. He added that the government attaches "the utmost imme atternant site Patias gen terror attack and op a grant error attack and op a grant error attack "the Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment on Mr. Trump's remarke, and directed atternance "the proposed sea, entrepreneurs, especially marked and directed atternance attack and the sea of the proposed sea, entrepreneurs, especially marked and directed atternance and the sea of the sea l don't care what India does with Russia. They can take their dead economies down together, for all I care

> Was now in the processor of choosing the oil company that will lead this parmership. maybe they'll be selling oil to DONALD TRUMP

sections of industry. "The government is confident that we will contime our fast-paced jour-ney of inclusive growth and sustainable develop-ment towards the goal of Vikett Blarst 2047, India is moving confidently to-wards sub-reliance. Mr. Goyal added, referring to india as one of the "top five economies of the world",

which is possed to become the third-largest. In his statement, Mr. Goyal defended India's re-Goyal defended india's re-cord on trade agreements, highlighting that in an in-creasingly persectionist world, listle had entered into a number of "inotically beneficial" trade agree-ments with the UAE, the U.K., Australia and Euro-penn Free Trade Associa-

"All things not good", Mr. Trump had said in a so-No. Trump had said in a sec-cial meeth poor on Wednes-day, while saying that inche-day, while saying man and a possible property of the said of the 20% phase a pensalty from Friday for baying military busins. Dr. Thorsday morn-ing, he posted the U.S. and inche "don't do a lot of the U.S. conducted raide in goods and sorviese worth BOR thillon, with a surplus factors."

favour.

While the government has thus far maintained that it is continuing talks with U.S. negotiators over a Free Trude Agreement (PTA), which was launched by Prime Minister Narent dra Modi and Mr. Tromp during a meeting in Wash-ington in Pebruary, the strong words from Mr. Trump appear to indicate

serious differences between the two sides.
In assorber jibe was a serious and a seriou

meet its energy demands, but there are reports about vast offshore deposits that are largely unexplored due to a lack of technical exper-use and funds. (With FIT Inputs)

Passing the baton



SC pulls up Telangana Speaker over pending defection petitions against 10 BRS MLAs

Chairpersons would live up to the dignity of their high office and crush the "evil of political defection" by deciding disqualifica-tion proceedings against legislators in time and without favour.

The top court sounded the warning hells while directing the Telangana Acsembly Speaker to deside
the disparative and disparative and
the disparative and disparative and
the disparative and disparative and
the disparative and the disparative and
together a speak made
by the late parlamentarian
disparative to the reding congrees in the Seate in 2024,
The veedlet by a Bench
as Tillmand to adjustice and

headed by Chief Justice of India B.K. Cavat said the Speaker must decide the speaker must decide the as early as possible, and not exceed three mouths at any cost. The court notest any cost. The court notest cost in the cost of the recedings often died a "rat-ural death" after being lept in limb by Speakers for mouths together until the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cost of the cost of the cost of the death of the cost of the cos CJI noted that the SC has had

many pleas complaining of delay by Assembly Speakers drew to an end.
The court further or disqualification petitions was to "swoid dilly-dallying in the courts of law or the Election Commission". dered that the Telangana Speaker should draw adverse inference against any MLA who tries to delay the

Rection Commission."
"With the experience of over 30 years of working of the Tenth Schedule (anti-defection law) to the Constitution, the question that we will have to ask our selves is whother the trial which the Parliament on trunked in the high office of

the Speaker or the Chair-man of avoiding delays in deciding the issue with re-gard to disqualification has been adhered to by the in-cumbents in the high office of Speaker and the Chair-man or next? Chair Justice Care. THERES NO 1 OF S Gavat said. The court said the Te-

langana Speaker certainly did not make the cut as far as "dilly-dallying" went. The Speaker had issued notice on the disqualification proceedings only after BRS leaders bad appealed to the Supreme Court in Ja-nuary 2028.

the Speaker/Chairman... the Speaker/Chairman... Non-issuaise of any notice for a period of more than seven months, and inviting notice only after the pro-ceedings were filed before this court or after this court had beard the matter for the first the seven for the first time current by any stretch be envisaged as acting in an expeditious manner," Chief Justice Ga-

manner, Chief Justice Gavai noted.
Chief Justice Gavai noted that the top court has had many petitions complaining of delay by the Assembly Speakers, making the Tenth Schedule a mockers.

nuary 2023.

We ask ourselves
we have a superior of the manner when expedition
was one of the main reacuitrosted the important
task of adjudicating dispositivation petitions to
the State of Court of the State of the

Special NIA court acquits all 7 accused in Malegaon bomb blast after 17 years

Althoot 17 years after a bomb black killed 68; people in the Maharashtra town of Malegaon, a spewer seems of Malegaon, a spewer seems of Malegaon, a spewer seems of Malegaon, and the Malegaon Colonel Presad Shrithe prosecution had falled to prove its case.

"Upon comprehensive evaluation, the prosecution country of the Malegaon of Malegaon

cogent evidence, and the evidence is riddled with in-consistencies. Therefore, the court has to extend the the court has to extend the benefit of doubt to all accused." Special Judge A.K. Lahoti said, delivering the Lahoti said, delivering the Lahoti said, delivering the control of the Lahoti said, delivering the Lahoti said, delivering the Lahoti said that the Lahoti said that the Lahoti said that the prosecution had falled which the hornow the court added. Justice Lahoti said that the prosecution had falled which the humby was allegiedly attapped belonged to Ma. Thaku.

Ma. Thaku.

not completely recovered by the forensic experts and, therefore, the prose-

and, therefore, the prose-cution failed to prove that Pragya. Thakur was the sowner of the two wheeler was the properties of the log that Ats. Thakur had furmed into a sanyasi and left behind all material be-longings two years before "There is no copen mute-rial against live or any offi-er accused in the case," be-sald. terrorist activity." Justice Laboli and.

The court accepted the prosecution's arguments that six people were killed in the bomb blast. However, it only accepted 95 people on the last of lupred, and not 101 people as claimed, as some of the



The other accused in the case were: Ramesh Upadhyay, Sameer Kulkar-nt, Ajay Rahirkar, Sudha-kar Dwivedi, and Sudhakar Chatarvedi.

'No proof of conspiracy' The judge said it was hard to establish the prosecu-Hors' claims of a compita-cy between the accused, adding that there was no evidence to prove claims of the compitation of the control of the compitation of the compitation of the control of the prove that Colonel Purchit issured BIX from Kashuria or that he assembled the control of the control of the Additional of the control of the call transactions between tion's claims of a conspira

cial transactions between Purchit and another ac-cused Ajay Rahirkar as offi-cials of Abhnay Bharat, the money was used by Purobit only towards the con-struction of his house and LIC policy and not for any terrorist activity," hastice

The court said the fami ly members of the six de-ceased victims were eligi-ble for a compensation of t2 lakh each, while those who were injured should be paid t50,000 each.

It was on September 29, 2006 - during the boly menth of Ramean and a day before the start of Navday before the start of Nav-rost) - Unit a bomble engle-sion recked a Mindian-dom-inated area of Malagaion at around 9.38 p.m. The blass was allegedly cathed by an improvined explosive dev-les (IEEO) fitted to an LML.

probe intensified, the pro-visions of two stringent anlaws - the Unlawful Activi Crime Act, 1999 (MCCCA)

— were invoked.

The ATS alleged that the

India a 'bright spot', says govt. amid Trump tirade

U.S. President lashes out at India on ties with Russia, membership of 'anti-American' BRICS, high tariffs

He announces that the U.S. and Pakistan have concluded a deal to develop massive oil reserves

Commerce Minister defends India's trade record, cites deals with UAE, U.K., Australia, and EFTA

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan Suhasini Haidar

NEW DELHI

ndia and Russia could "take their dead economies down together", U.S. President Donald Trump said among a barrage of statements targeting India on Thursday, a day before the 25% tariffs announced on Indian imports by the U.S. are set to take effect.

However, countering Mr. Trump's statement, Commerce and Industries Minister Piyush Goyal said India is being seen as an economic "bright spot" in the world.

In statements on social media and then while speaking to presspersons at the White House, Mr. Trump lashed out at India for its ties with Russia, membership of the "anti-American" BRICS, high tariffs, "massive" trade deficit with the U.S., and for imposing the "most strenuous and obnoxious nonmonetary trade barriers of any country".

Energy trade with Iran

The U.S. State Department also sanctioned six Indian companies and five Indian nationals for involvement in energy trade with Iran.

Mr. Trump also announced that the U.S. and Pakistan had concluded a deal whereby the two countries will work together on "developing their massive oil reserves", in continuation with the U.S.'s growing closeness with Pakistan over trade issues in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor.

The Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment on Mr. Trump's remarks, and directed attention to the Commerce Ministry statements.

The U.S. is expected to start levying duties as part of its 'Liberation Day' tariffs on imports from countries around the world from Friday.

The Centre said it was examining the impact of the 25% tariffs as well as undefined penalties for India's energy imports from Russia.

In a suo motu statement in Parliament on Thursday. Mr. Goyal said the government has been meeting stakeholders. domestic "including exporters and industry", to assess the impact of the new tariffs. He added that the government attaches "the utmost importance" to protecting and promoting the welfare of India's farmers, workers, entrepreneurs, exporters, micro, small and medium enterprises, and all I don't care what India does with Russia. They can take their dead economies down together, for all I care



We are in the process of choosing the oil company that will lead this partnership [with Pakistan]. Who knows, maybe they'll be selling oil to India some day

DONALD TRUMP U.S. President

sections of industry.

"The government is confident that we will continue our fast-paced journey of inclusive growth and sustainable development towards the goal of Viksit Bharat 2047. India is moving confidently towards self-reliance," Mr. Goyal added, referring to India as one of the "top five economies of the world".

which is poised to become the third-largest.

In his statement, Mr. Goyal defended India's record on trade agreements, highlighting that in an increasingly protectionist world, India had entered into a number of "mutually beneficial" trade agreements with the UAE, the U.K., Australia and European Free Trade Associa-

tion (EFTA) countries.

"All things not good", Mr. Trump had said in a social media post on Wednesday, while saying that India would be paying a tariff of 25% plus a penalty from Friday for buying military hardware and energy from Russia. On Thursday morning, he posted the U.S. and India "don't do a lot of trade". In 2024, India and the U.S. conducted trade in goods and services worth \$186 billion, with a surplus of \$41 billion in India's favour.

While the government has thus far maintained that it is continuing talks with U.S. negotiators over a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Trump during a meeting in Washington in February, the strong words from Mr. Trump appear to indicate

serious differences between the two sides.

In another jibe, Mr. Trump added that Pakistan may be "selling oil to India someday!"

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday thanked Mr. Trump for the "historic" trade agreement reached between Islamabad and Washington, and expressed hope that it would expand cooperation between the two nations.

Pakistan currently imports oil from West Asia to meet its energy demands, but there are reports about vast offshore deposits that are largely unexplored due to a lack of technical expertise and funds.

(With PTI inputs)

EDITORIAL

» PAGE 8

RELATED REPORTS ON

» PAGES 3, 6, 12, & 14

Trump's Allegations Against India:

- Criticized India for:
 - Ties with Russia
 - Being part of BRICS, termed "anti-American"
 - High tariffs on U.S. goods
 - Creating non-monetary trade barriers
- Accused India of a massive trade deficit with the U.S.
- Threatened 25% tariffs and penalties on Indian imports, especially from Russia.
- Took aim at India-Russia defense and energy cooperation.

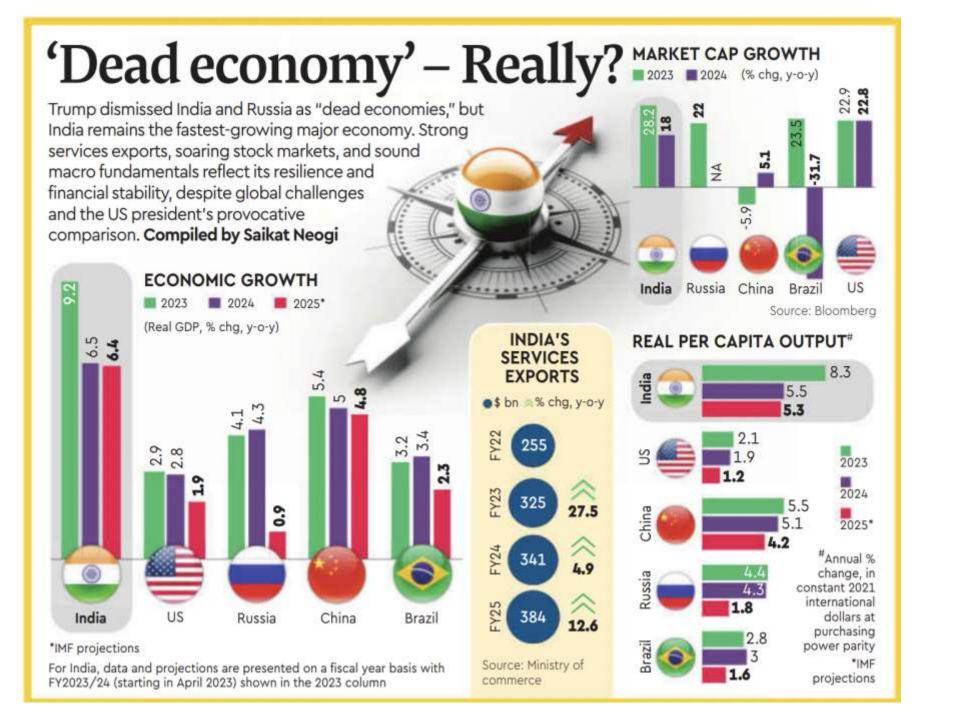
Q U.S. – Pakistan Oil Deal:

- Trump announced a deal with Pakistan to develop massive oil reserves.
- U.S. will help choose oil companies for extraction.
- Speculated that Pakistan may "sell oil to India someday".

Diplomatic Reactions:

- India's MEA declined to comment directly on Trump's statements.
- Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif thanked Trump for "historic trade agreement".
- Some analysts flagged growing U.S.-Pakistan closeness.

Area	Issue
Strategic Equality	U.S. does not treat India as an equal; resents India's global ambitions.
Geopolitics	U.S. wary of India's ties with Russia, Iran, and participation in BRICS.
Projection of Power	India seeks global leadership; U.S. skeptical of any non-U.S. assertiveness.
Trade Relations	U.S. insists on greater market access; India maintains protectionist policies.





EXPERT TAKES

Hit to India's GDP from US tariff

Goldman Sachs

0.3%

Nomura

0.2%

HSBC Global Research

0.3%

CareEdge

S

0.3-0.4%



■ Tariff could pull economic growth below 6%, a sharp drop from earlier forecasted levels ■ Most brokerages await clarity on tariff scope, exemptions, and penalty size before revising official GDP projections

Policy uncertainty may deter Indian firms from investing, especially those exposed to US trade

India hesitant to open agri, dairy sectors; BTA talks could therefore face prolonged delays

☐ Potential Economic Impact on India:

Indicator/Area	Details
GDP Growth Impact	- 20 to 40 basis point (bps) cut - Growth may fall below 6 %
HSBC Estimate	Tariffs could cause a 0.3 ppt (percentage point) dip in GDP
ANZ Estimate	If continued till 2025-26, 40 bps cut from GDP growth
Nomura Estimate	20 bps downgrade in GDP projection
Current RBI Estimate	6.5% growth forecast for 2025-26
Current ANZ Forecast	6.1% for 2024-25 (lower than RBI)
Finance Ministry Estimate	6.3%-6.8% for 2025-26

Q. Consider the following statements about the impact of the US tariff hike on the Indian economy:

- 1. The proposed US tariff on Indian imports is expected to be around 40% from August 2024.
- The HSBC estimate suggests that the tariff could reduce India's GDP by approximately 0.3 percentage points.
- 3. The Indian government has accepted the tariff hike and welcomed fair trade with the U.S.
- 4. The Reserve Bank of India has already reduced interest rates significantly in 2024 to counter low inflation and external shocks.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 4 only
- C. 2, 3 and 4 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3 only

Indian refiners pause Russian oil purchases

NIDHI VERMA New Delhi, July 31

INDIAN STATE REFINERS have stopped buying Russian oil in the past week as discounts narrowed this month and US President Donald Trump warned countries not to purchase oil from Moscow, industry sources

India, the world's thirdlargest oil importer, is the biggest buyer of seaborne Russian crude, a vital revenue earner for Russia as it wages war in Ukraine for a fourth year.

The country's state refiners - Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum, Bharat Petroleum and Mangalore Refinery Petrochemical - have not sought

Russian crude in the past week or so, four sources familiar with the refiners' purchase plans told Reuters.

IOC. BPCL. HPCL, MRPL and the federal oil ministry did not immediately

respond to Reuters' requests for tion on buyers of Russian comment. The four refiners regularly buy Russian oil on a delivered basis and have turned to spot markets for replacement supply-mostly Middle Eastern grades such as Abu Dhabi's Murban crude and West African oll, sources said.

Private refiners Reliance Industries and Navara Energy. majority owned by Russian entities including oil major Rosneft, have annual deals with Moscow and are the biggest Russian oil buyers in India.

On July 14, Trump threat-remainder.

ened 100% tariffs on countries that buy Russian oil unless Moscow reaches a major peace deal with Ukraine.

Indian refiners are pulling back from Russian crude as discounts shrink to their lowes since 2022, when Westerr sanctions were first imposed or Moscow, due to lower Russiar exports and steady demand sources said.

Refiners fear the latest EL curbs could complicate over seas trade including fund raising - even for buyers adhering to the price cap. India has reiterated its opposition to "unilatera sanctions".

Trump on Wednesday announced a 25% tariff or goods imported from India

Refiners fear the

latest EU curbs

could complicate

overseas trade

including fund

raising - even for

buyers adhering to

the price cap

from August 1, bur added that negotiations were ongoing. He also warned of potential penalties for purchase of Russian arms and oil.

On Monday Trump cut the deadline to impose secondary sanc

exports to 10-12 days from the previous 50-day period, it Moscow does not agree a peace deal with Ukraine.

Russia is the top supplier to India, responsible for about 35% of India's overall supplies

Private refiners bought nearly 60% of India's average 1.8 million barrels per day o Russian oil imports in the first half of 2025, while state refiners that control over 60% or India's overall 5.2 million bpc refining capacity, bought the REUTERS

India's Oil Trade with Russia:

Indicator/Detail	Data/Information
India's Rank in Oil Import	3rd largest globally
Russia's Share in Indian Oil Imports	~35% of India's total imports (as of 2025)
Refiners who paused purchases	IOC, BPCL, HPCL, MRPL, Mangalore Refinery
Reason for pause	Discounts fell + fear of sanctions from U.S. and EU
Alternative sources	Abu Dhabi's Murban crude, West African oil
Private refiners (Reliance & Nayara)	Still buying due to long-term contracts with Rosneft



Suheldev Bharatiya Samai Party to contest Bihar election

The Subekkev Bharathya Samaj Party national president and Ustar Pradesh Cabines Minister Om Psakash Kajihar on Titurcalay said that his party will contest the upcoming Assembly election in Bhara Mr. Rajbhar also asserted that even if the National Democratic Alliance (WDA) does not strong him along, his party will show its strength in the upcoming poli on its own. The Ultar Fradesh based party's chief was in Parna to take part in a workers' conference. Mr. Rajbhar said the NDA government in Bihar, led by Chief Minister Nitish Rumar, has not done enough for the upliftment of Extremely Backward Classes.

75 lakh saplings to be planted in a day to mark PM's birthday

The Mohan Might government is set to plant? Stakh saphings across Odisha in a single day on supportable 2; to mark frime Minister Marendra meeting on Tuesday, the Chief Minister and is would be Odisha's gift to the Prime Minister, acknowledging his contributions to the nation tail his speaked commitment to the State's and his speaked commitment to the State's and in special committee in the case."

PSUs, NGOs, youth organisations and voluntary groups must be roped in. Panchaydra, schools, colleges, and solf-help groups will play key roles in the initiative," Mr. Majhi said, stressing the need for wider public participation.

Durga Puja organisers to get grant of ₹1.10 lakh: Mamata

The Chief Minister's announcement, which will cost the exchequer ₹495 crore, is a 30% increase from last year's ₹85,000; Opposition parties term hike a 'bribe' ahead of Rengal Assembly election

Shiv Sahay Singh

est Bengul Chief Minister Jee on Thursday said that the Durga Puja communi-ties this year will receive an innovarian of TA to lath, a like of almost 20% from last year's 186,000.

The annual content of the deal of the West

Bengal Assembly poils re-ceived criticism from the Opposition parties, who described the honorarium hike as a "turbe".

Electricity rebate

Electricity relate Stating that there are about 45,000 Durga Pula clubs, Ms. Banerjee said that the honorarium is going to cost 4408 crore to the State exchequer. The Chief Mi-nister also urged electricity emply companies to sixmuter also urged electricity supply companies to give an 80% rebate to the clubs. "Last year the zum was £85,000, this year hum much you want?" asked Ms. Batteries while addessing a gathering at the Netaji Indoor Stadium in Kelbata. "Let us fix ii as 13,10 lakh this year," she added.

Highlighting the signifi-cance of the festival to the



FeeDus shows The Durge Puje festival will be held in the fast week of September, and the Durge Puje Commet will be held on October 6. There are about \$5,000 Gurge Puje stubs in West Bergal, and

people of the state. the propie of the State, the Chief Minister urged the organisers to focus on crowd management, and she advised the clubs not to compete with each oth-er to draw large crowds, The clubs should engage

more volunteers and have separate entry and exits at Durga Puja joundals, Ms. Barerjee sidd.

The festival will be held in the last week of September, and the Durga Puja

Carnival will be held on Oc-tober 5.

Ms. Baneriee urged the even pay \$2 lakh to Durga request the committees to help migrant workers, who Anganwadi workers, civic police volunteers and othare returning to Bengal af-ter facing ferture in BIP-ruled States."

or contractual staff, Mr. Adhikari said. The Leader of the Opposition also predicted that before the Assembly elec-tions, Ms. Banerjee would bike the benerarism given Pay DA first Sevendu Leader of the Opposition in West Bengal Assembly, Sweeds Adhikari, said that the Chief Minister can to imams and muessins by

Panneerselvam quits NDA, meets Stalin twice in a day

T. Bamakrishnan

fin on two separate occa-sions, once during his morning walk at the Theosophical Society in Adyar, and later in the evening at the Chief Minister's resi

the Chief Minister's resi-dence in Alwarpet in Chennal.

In the morning, the leaders' interaction was said to have lasted it mi-nutes. In the evening, Mr Panneerselevam, accompa-nied by his son and former Them. Mr P. Savindhra-nath Kumar, me the Chief Alwarner. They hold the Alwarper. They held dis-cussions with him and De-puty Chief Miniater Ud-hayanidhi Stalin for about 48 minutes. He described the meeting as a 'courtesy call', and said he enquired about the health of the Chief Minister, who was re-



CM M.K. Stallin with furmer CM O. Panneerselvam in Chennal

conveyed his condolences over the death of M.K. Mathu. Earlier in the day, Mr. Punnoerselvam chaired a

trieval Committee, was no longer in the NDA. On the he said there was no need for him to state it explicitly.

Faithful find ways to share crematoria in Meghalaya

+ The Hindu Bureau

Hindus and adherents of Hindus and adherente of molegenous faiths among two othnic groups in Negh-alaya are sloser to an agreement on sharing common cremateria, the Meghalaya High Court has been told. The court, he weves, anught more meet-ings with the stakeholders for a cleaure to the contro-versy over sharing a correversy over sharing a com mon space by commu-ties that bury their dead.

A Division Beach com-prising Chief Justice Indra Presents Mukerij and Jus-Prasanna Mukerji and Jus-tice Wantura Diengdoh also underscored the dearth of space for Initial, necessiof space for burial, necessi-tating common cemeteries for members of all denom-inations of Christians in the hill State, it asked the articus curies to file a short report on the development on August 14, the pext data of bearing.

At work, with hope



No school to be permanently merged, no reduction in teaching posts: U.P. Minister

And growing uproar over Amid growing upress; over the merger of government grimary and upper prim-ary schools, the Uttar Pra-desh government on Thurnday said no school has been permanently paired and there would be no reduction in the mun-ber of teaching posts.

The State government had recently announced plans to merge or pair nearly 10,000 primary and upper primary schools with low-student enrol ment, iriggoring protests from political parties, learliers, parents, and

The State goyt, said it will appoint new teachers, if needed, to maintain required student-teacher ratio

would be permanently paired. If student numbers the or souting becomes in adequate, clauses will rea-ture in the original build-lege, with UDBK (Unified Outset Information Sys-tem for Education) codes remaining unchanged."

He added that if stu-dents encounter difficulty in commuting, for in-

in commuting, for in stance, if she distance bet-ween the paired achords is over I fan or geographical challenges arise, the merg-er will be reversed. "Approximately 10,000 schools were identified for merging, and the process, along with the unmerging of achools where neces-

sary, will be completed in the coming week." Mr. singh said, adding that schools located in difficult terrains serves rivers, rull-way crassings, or highways. have been excluded from the pairing protess.

The roles of teachers and cooks will remain unaffect-ed. If needed, we will appoint new teachers to maintain the required stu-

Claiming that the ge-

Nearly 77% Delhi women seeking fertility treatment suffering from depression: study

A study by experts from Delhi University (DU) and Lady Hardings Medical Gollege (LHMC) has abown among women diagnosed with infertility. The study, tilled 'infer-

tility and its psychological impact, conducted by ex-perts, including a group of authropologists, a psycholambropologists, a psychologist and a gyniscologist roen UVs Ambropology and Psychology Depart ments, found nearly 779 women seeking fertility treatment at LHRC to be suffering from depression. Among fertile women, the proportion was 25%. The National Scientis-sion for Women had of

support and those with friends facing similar issues fared better than those without any emotional support CHARBAVERTIMAHAIAN dered the study in 2019, it

denied the study in 2019. It comprises eight papers, six of which have been pu-blished in peer-reviewed the peer study of the three years, with work on the remaining in progross. The papers touch upon ty and meral well-being. Their findings, based on data from 2020 to 2022, will be discussed at a work-shop in 18% in August.

Delhi has not only re-corded the lowest Total Fertility Rate (TFR), the av-erage number of children per woman, but also the highest decline in the TFR in recent years, according to a report by the Begistrar tieneral of India for 2021, released in May this year.
Academics and repro-ductive health specialists

have cited inflation, more women in the workforce, independent decision-making, better maternal and infant health, and in-fertility as possible reasons for Helhi's lowest TFE.

Need for support One of the researchers, Chakraveru Mahajan, said, "Through detailed inter-views of 30 women thag-nosed with infertility, we found that those with

spousal support and sup-portive in-laws or those with friends facing similar issues fared better than those without any emo-tional support.

The study suggests that remit, the public health-age system must provide

eare system must provide psychological support to women diagnosed with infertility, which could be in

fertility, which cand be in the form of poor group in-terior of the poor of the whole are coping better which are coping better could share the atraugles that have helped them "Act he amen store, coun-selling services could be provided to warmen, which provided to warmen, which the sireon of infortility has the sireon of infortility has also prepare them for the often exhausting intertility treatment? I adds.

Himachal Cabinet gives nod for OBC reservation in civic polls proval for the constitution of a Backward Classes Commission that would compile accurate data on the population of back-ward classes before finalis-

The Hirmachal Pradesh government on Thursday conducted its fourth straight Cabinet meeting in the past four dispersion including a med for introducing Other Backword Class (CRC) reservation in the uncentum servation in the upcoming elections to urban local bo dies (ULBO in the hill State The reservation policy in civic polls was until now restricted to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe munities and women

The Cabinet meetings bet-ween July 28 and July 31 were chaired by Chief Mi-nister Sukhvinder Singh The Cabinet meeting between the continuous and the continuous were sharined by Clind Minister Sukhrvinder Singh Sukhu.

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relief camps. Families will receive ribt assistance through Direct Benefit Transfew at the rate of 13,000 per month in urban areas for a maximum period of 6 months, it added. The Tablinst also are ward classes before mani-ing the reservation rester. The State's Urban Develop-ment Department over-sees % U.Bs. Among other decisions, the Cabinet recommended

to the Governor to convene the Monacon Session of the Himachal Pradesh State Assembly from Augast 18 to September 2, 2025, according to an offi-cial statement.

approval for providing fi-rancial assistance in the form of tent support for af-fected families residing in relief camps. Families will

months, it added.

The Cabinet also approved a cete-time isgacy
proved a cete-time isgacy
gistered construction
equipment whicks. Under
this policy, coverse can rethe policy, coverse can repayment of the applicable
payment of the applicable
in imp some The policy
will remain in effoct for
three months from the
later of notification.

CBI to handle 'suicide case' of Assam PWD engineer

The Hindu Bureau

tant engineer of Public Works Department to the CBL Soshita Das, was found

dead in her apartment in western Assam's Bengai-guen tewn on July 22. Her parents alleged she was be-ing pressured to dear in thated bills.

third bills.

Those in distress may contact Saugivini, Society for Menial Health suicide prevention helpline: Ottoriology.

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Nearly 77% Delhi women seeking fertility treatment suffering from depression: study

Ashna Butani

NEW DELHI

A study by experts from Delhi University (DU) and Lady Hardinge Medical College (LHMC) has shown high prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression among women diagnosed with infertility.

The study, titled 'Infertility and its psychological impact', conducted by experts, including a group of anthropologists, a psychologist and a gynaecologist from DU's Anthropology and Psychology Departments, found nearly 77% women seeking fertility treatment at LHMC to be suffering from depression.

Among fertile women, the proportion was 23%.

The National Commission for Women had or-



We found that women with spousal

support and those with friends facing similar issues fared better than those without any emotional support

CHAKRAVERTI MAHAJAN Researcher

dered the study in 2019. It comprises eight papers, six of which have been published in peer-reviewed journals over the past three years, with work on the remaining in progress.

The papers touch upon various aspects of infertility and mental well-being.

Their findings, based on data from 2020 to 2022, will be discussed at a workshop in DU in August. Delhi has not only recorded the lowest Total Fertility Rate (TFR), the average number of children per woman, but also the highest decline in the TFR in recent years, according to a report by the Registrar General of India for 2021, released in May this year.

Academics and reproductive health specialists have cited inflation, more women in the workforce, independent decisionmaking, better maternal and infant health, and infertility as possible reasons for Delhi's lowest TFR.

Need for support

One of the researchers, Chakraverti Mahajan, said, "Through detailed interviews of 30 women diagnosed with infertility, we found that those with spousal support and supportive in-laws or those with friends facing similar issues fared better than those without any emotional support."

The study suggests that apart from providing treatment, the public health-care system must provide psychological support to women diagnosed with infertility, which could be in the form of peer group interactions, where women who are coping better could share the strategies that have helped them manage their emotions.

"At the same time, counselling services could be provided to women, which will not only help alleviate the stress of infertility but also prepare them for the often exhausting infertility treatment," it adds.

Study Details:

- Conducted by: Delhi University (DU) and Lady Hardinge Medical College (LHMC)
- Title: "Infertility and its psychological impact"
- Scope:
 - 8 papers (6 peer-reviewed, 2 in progress)
 - Data from 2020–2022
 - Led by DU's Anthropology & Psychology Departments
- Focused on:
 - Stress
 - Anxiety
 - Depression in women diagnosed with infertility

Category	% Affected
Women with infertility	77% show signs of depression
Fertile women (for comparison)	23% had depression

- Emotional support plays a crucial role:
 - Women with spousal support, supportive in-laws, or friends facing similar issues coped better.
- Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Delhi:
 - Lowest among all Indian states (as per Registrar General of India, 2021).
 - · Delhi also had the sharpest decline in TFR in recent years.

Suggested Policy Measures:

- · Public healthcare should:
 - Provide psychological support to women seeking fertility treatment.
 - Organize peer support groups.
 - Offer counselling services to address:
 - Mental stress
 - Emotional preparedness for treatment

Contributing Factors to Low TFR in Delhi:

- Inflation
- Women's workforce participation
- · Independent decision-making
- Delayed marriages
- · Maternal & child health concerns

♣ Top 5 States with Highest Fertility (TFR > 2.1)

These states still exceed the replacement level of ~2.1 children per womar

- 1. Bihar 3.00 Wikipedia +8
- 2. Meghalaya 2.91 Wikipedia The Economic Times
- 3. Uttar Pradesh 2.35 Wikipedia +5
- 4. Jharkhand 2.30 Wikipedia Wikipedia The Economic Times
- 5. Manipur 2.17 Wikipedia +9

Lowest 5 States with Fertility Well Below Replacement

These states are often below TFR 1.6:

- Sikkim 1.05 Wikipedia +14
- Goa 1.32 Wikipedia +3
- Ladakh 1.30 Wikipedia
- Chandigarh 1.39 Wikipedia +2
- Jammu & Kashmir 1.40 Wikipedia

Also notable are **Delhi** and **West Bengal**, each reporting a TFR around **1.57–1.60**

Impact of Women's Education on Fertility Rates

The **higher the education level**, the **lower the TFR**, consistently across states:

- Women with no schooling: Average TFR ~2.8–3.0 children per woman
- Women who completed 5–9 years of schooling: TFR ~2.1–2.4
- Women who completed 10–11 years: TFR ~1.9–2.2
- Women with 12+ years (higher education): TFR falls to ~1.5–1.8

State-Level Snapshot (NFHS-5, 2019–21):

Data on total fertility rate by education categories for selected states:

State	No Schooling	<5 Yrs	5-9 Yrs	10-11 Yrs	12+ Yrs
Bihar	3.83	3.47	3.01	2.41	2.17
Jharkhand	2.83	2.81	2.28	2.21	1.87
Gujarat	2.81	2.24	2.03	1.89	1.54
Maharashtra	2.34	2.17	2.11	1.84	1.63
Punjab	2.47	2.52	2.03	1.92	1.54

According to NFHS-5, the fertility rates among major religious communities are:

Muslim: 2.36 children/woman

Hindu: 1.94

Christian: 1.88

• Sikh: 1.61

Jain: 1.60

Buddhist / Neo-Buddhist: 1.39

Convergence Over Time

- In 1992–93, the TFR gap between Muslims and Hindus was about 1.1 children/woman.
- By 2019-21, this gap had reduced to 0.42 children (2.36 1.94) The Times of India The India Forum .
- Every religious group has seen a steady decline:
 - Muslim fertility has dropped ~46.5% since 1992 survey,
 - Hindu fertility down ~41.2%,
 - Christian and Sikh groups down ~33% each Pew Research Center +15 The Times of India X (formerly Twitter) +3

X (formerly Twitter) +2

- India's national TFR is ~2.0, just below replacement level of ~2.1 children per woman Wikipedia +6.
- 31 out of 36 states/UTs have achieved or are below the replacement level, with only 5 states exceeding it: Bihar, UP, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Manipur The Economic Times .
- Southern and urbanized states like **Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana**, and **Goa** report **TFRs between 1.3–1.8**, often below national average The New Indian Express Wikipedia.
- States with higher fertility rates largely correlate with lower literacy/economic development, and a larger rural population.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding a recent study on infertility in Delhi:

- The study found that over 75% of infertile women undergoing treatment at LHMC suffered from some form of depression.
- 2. Delhi has recorded the highest Total Fertility Rate among Indian states, according to 2021 data.
- 3. Women with emotional support from spouses or friends were less likely to suffer depression.
- 4. The study recommends integrating psychological counselling with fertility treatment.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- A. 1, 2 and 3 only
- B. 1, 3 and 4 only
- C. 2, 3 and 4 only
- D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Why Mussoorie hotels must now register guests on govt portal

AISWARYARAJ

DEHRADUN, JULY 31

OWNERS OF hotels, guesthouses, and homestays in Mussoorie will now have to register their guests on an Internet portal run by the Uttarakhand Department of Tourism as part of measures to ensure that the fragile ecology of the region is not burdened beyond its 'carrying capacity' — which refers to the maximum number of individuals an ecosystem or specific area can sustainably support without degrading natural resources or causing significant environmental damage.

This directive is part of a suite of 19 preventive and remedial measures recommended in a 2023 report by a committee appointed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to protect 19 recommendations, on Wednesday. A meetthe environment of the tourist destination. 19 recommendations, on Wednesday. A meeting was convened to apprise owners of hotels

On May 8, the Tribunal took note of the action taken based on the report in an affidavit by the state government, and pressed the state to expedite the implementation of these steps.

Process of registration

"Registration of tourists should be done according to the carrying capacity of the area, especially the available parking space, guest room availabity, etc. Tourists can be charged for visiting the Mussoorie area, and the payment can be utilised for managing waste and cleanliness." the 2023 report had said.

After dragging its feet for some time, the state Tourism Department began trials on the registration of tourists, which was one of the

19 recommendations, on Wednesday, A meeting was convened to apprise owners of hotels and homestays of the order, district tourism development officer Brijendra Pandey said.

"We have given a live demo to the managers and owners on how to register their units in the system and fill in the data of the tourists. This registration will be carried out in real time when visitors checkin." Pandey said.

Rising tourism pressure

Tourist arrivals in Mussoorie, which is around 320 km from Delhi and well connected by road and rail (till Dehradun), have been increasing steadily. From an estimated 1.5 lakh in 1958, the number of tourists reached 3 lakh in 1966, and 8.5 lakh by 2000. In 2019, the last year before the Covid-19 pandemic, more than 30 lakh tourists visited the hill station.

The rush of tourists has put great pressure on Mussoorie's physical infrastructure. As of 2023, the registered accommodation in the area included 303 hotels, 201 homestays, and six dharamshalas. All public and private parking together had space for only 1,240 vehicles, and the committee had suggested in 2023 that the number of tourist vehicles should be limited to this number.

The 2011 Census recorded the resident population of Mussoorie at 30,118. The 2023 report estimated this number would increase by 23% by 2037 and 52% by 2052. The hill station already suffers from a shortage of water — the 7,69 million litres per day supply from six pumping stations and six gravity sources by the Mussoorie Nagar Palika has

to be augmented by water from the Yamuna Water Supply Scheme.

Fragile Himalayan zone

The hill station, located at an altitude of 2,005 metres above sea level in the foothills of the Garhwal Himalayas, is in Seismic Zone IV, one step below the most active Zone V.

A2007 study had concluded that the highly jointed, fractured, and weathered carbonate rock mass, and the steep slopes and high water percolation into them, create ideal conditions for slope instability in the area. Many buildings stand on slopes steeper than 40 degrees, and many are taller than the 12-metre height permissible under the Uttarakhand Building By-Laws and Regulation, 2001.

The NGT had earlier cited a report by the

Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration on Mussoonie's carrying capacity in 2001, which had concluded that no further constructions were viable. Dr Vikram Gupta of Dehradun's Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology had backed this finding, saying that the limestone in Mussoorie was weak with microcracks.

In 2023, following the Joshimath land subsidence incident, the NGT had flagged similar risks to Mussoorie and surrounding areas.

"Over-concretisation leads to landslides. The proposed tunnel below Mussoorie is dangerous. So is the proposed ropeway from Dehradun to Mussoorie. The ropeway and tunnel have damaged Joshimath... Excessive building activities are beyond the capacity of Mussoorie." It had said.

- The Uttarakhand Department of Tourism has mandated online guest registration for hotels, guesthouses, and homestays in Mussoorie.
- Aim: To regulate tourist inflow and protect the fragile Himalayan ecology by monitoring carrying capacity.

Factor	Details
Crisis Trigger	Based on 2023 committee report; flagged environmental concerns
NGT Action	NGT directed implementation after Joshimath land subsidence incident
Overtourism	30 lakh tourists in 2019 vs 1.5 lakh in 1958
Accommodation Stats	303 hotels, 201 homestays, 6 dharamshalas as of 2023
Parking Limitation	Space for only 1,240 vehicles
Water Scarcity	7.69 million litres/day shortfall in water supply
Urban Fragility	Mussoorie lies in Seismic Zone IV; steep slopes; weak limestone
Construction Ban	2001 Wadia Institute & LBSNAA report: No further viable constructions

Registration Directive Highlights:

- Tourist data to be recorded in real-time at check-in
- Will monitor capacity usage and plan for sustainable tourism
- Ensures revenue accountability, parking usage, and resource planning

Population & Projections:

Year	Population Estimate
2011	30,118 (Census)
2037 (est)	+23% from 2011
2052 (est)	+52% from 2011



HOW A DOOMSDAY CULT IN KENYA LEFT AT LEAST 400 PEOPLE DEAD

A COURT IN Kenya has ordered the exhumation of around 400 bodies suspected to be of people who starved themselves to death in a cult ritual two years ago. These bodies are believed to have been buried in shallow graves on the outskirts of Malindi, Reuters reported.

Mackenzie & his church

At the centre of the scandal is Paul Mackenzie, a taxi driver turned evangelist who has been a religious leader for two decades.

Unlike the Roman Catholic or Anglican churches, which are governed by hierarchies and rules, many evangelical churches in Kenya are "run by independent preachers who have no oversight", according to a 2023 report by The New York Times. Mackenzie's Good News International, with its sprawling campus in the Shakahola forests near Malindi, was one such church.

According to the church's website, it was established "to nurture the faithful holistically in all matters of Christian spirituality as we prepare for the second coming of Jesus Christ through teaching and evangelism".

Its TV show, titled End Time Messages, would broadcast "God's word based teachings, preaching and prophecy on end times...to bring the Gospel of our LORD Jesus Christ which is free of deceit and man's intellect." the website said.

A deadly plan

Mackenzie gained a cult following on the back of his TV show and YouTube videos. And with that, his message became increasingly deadly. In early 2023, he told his followers that the world was going to end by August, and that Satan would rule for the next 1,000 years. Subsequently, he ordered them to starve themselves and their children to death so they could meet Jesus in heaven instead.

According to police, Mackenzie is said to have had a three-stage plan: first to be killed would be the children, followed by the women, and then he himself would die with the men. He was able to make headway in his plan by brainwashing his followers, and cutting them off from their families and society. "Education is evil... Children are being taught lesbianism and gayism in school curriculums," he said in one video in 2023.

In March 2023, a resident of the area told police that his brother and sister-inlaw had starved their children to death in the forest on Mackenzie's orders. Officers searched and found the bodies, after which Mackenzie was arrested. But a magistrate freed him, after which he returned to the forest and speeded up his plans.

He was arrested again after another tip-off in April. A search of the 800-acre Shakahola campus led to the discovery of around 80 bodies, most showing signs of death by starvation, and some by asphyxiation. Mackenzie, who now faces charges of murder and terrorism, denies the accusations against him.

Kenya's President William Ruto had said the government would form a judicial commission of inquiry to establish why Mackenzie's alleged activities were not detected earlier. The President has faced strong criticism for his handling of the incident.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

A court in Kenya ordered the exhumation of nearly 400 bodies suspected to be cult members who
died by starvation in a ritualistic act in Malindi's Shakahola forests.

Key Person Involved:

Paul Mackenzie

- · Former taxi driver turned evangelist.
- · Founder of Good News International Church.
- Promoted extreme end-time prophecies through TV & YouTube.

Aspect	Details
Affiliation	Independent Evangelical Church (not under Roman/Anglican oversight)
Teachings	Focused on "End Time Messages"; warned of Satan ruling 1000 years
Location	Shakahola forests, near Malindi
Activities	Allegedly preached starvation to "meet Jesus in heaven"

1 The Deadly Plan:

- Three-stage killing plan:
 - 1. Starve/k*Il children
 - 2. Then women
 - 3. Finally, Mackenzie and the men
- Followers were cut off from families and society, brainwashed into rejecting education and mainstream society.

Timeline:

Month	Event
Mar 2023	Local tip-off; police found dead children on cult orders
Apr 2023	Another tip-off: 800-acre forest searched; 80+ bodies exhumed
Present	Total of ~400 bodies exhumed; investigation ongoing

Legal and Political Fallout:

- Mackenzie arrested twice (initially released once by magistrate).
- Faces murder and terrorism charges.
- Kenyan President William Ruto announced a judicial inquiry to probe failures in detection.
- Heavy public criticism for mishandling the issue.

Broader Issues for UPSC:

- Religious extremism
- Failures in state surveillance
- Psychological manipulation and cults
- Law and order lapses in developing countries
- Freedom of religion vs public safety

Ratadiya Ri Dheri



Artefacts likely from Harappan era unearthed in Thar: Experts

Mukesh Mathrani and Jagdish Goswami

letters@hindustantimes.com

BARMER/JAISALMER: Artefacts, estimated to be around 4,500 years old, have been discovered in the Thar desert, researchers said on Wednesday, adding that the remnants likely belong to the Harappan Civilisation. Experts claimed that this marks the first evidence of Harappan presence in the Thar desert.

The excavation was carried out by a joint team from Rajasthan University, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth Udaipur, and other experts, including researcher Dilip Kumar Saini, historian Parth Jagani, Professor Jeevan Singh Kharakwal, Tamegh Panwar, Ravindra Devda, Chatar Singh 'Jam', and Pradeep Kumar Garg. The findings at Ratadiya Ri Dheri near Ramgarh have been confirmed by Kharakwal, Panwar, and Devda, and a research



Artefacts that have been unearthed from Ratadiya Ri Dheri, Jaisalmer district.

paper has been submitted to the Indian Journal of Science for publication.

The site where the remnants were found about 60 km from Jaisalmer and 17 km north of Chhatrail. "From site, the researchers found a large quantity of fragmented pottery, including red slipped ware, bowls, jars, and pieces of perforated jars — artefacts typically associated with the urban phase of the Harappan Civilisation. Other discoveries include 8–10 cm blades made of chert stone.

bangles crafted from clay and shells, triangular and circular terracotta cakes, and stone grinders likely used for processing grains," Saini said.

He further said that a kiln with a central column was unearthed on the site's southern slope, resembling kilns found at Kanmer in Gujarat and Mohenjo-Daro in Pakistan. "The presence of wedge-shaped and standard bricks suggests the use of circular furnaces and walls, providing further evidence of an organized urban settlement in this harsh desert environment," he said.

Jagani highlighted the uniqueness of this site, which lies between northern Rajasthan and Gujarat, near the India-Pakistan border. "This not only expands the known geographical extent of the Harappan Civilisation but also underscores its adaptability to the challenging desert conditions." he said.









- A Harappan site has surfaced at Ratadiya Ri Dheri in Jaisalmer district, marking the first known Indus Valley settlement in the region.
- About
- It is located 17km northwest of Pakistan's Sadewala where Harappan traces were earlier found.
- This finds **bridges a vital archaeological gap** between northern Rajasthan and Gujarat.
 - Until now, **Pilibanga** in northern Rajasthan was the state's most prominent Harappan site discovered by Italian Indologist Luigi Pio Tessitori in the early 20th century and excavated in the 1960s.

A large quantity
of fragmented pottery is
scattered across the site,
including red ware, slipped
red ware, bowls, jars, and
perforated vessels.

Stone blades (8–10 cm)
likely made from
chert sourced from Rohri,
Pakistan

Terracotta cakes, grinding stones, clay and shell bangles, and other urban artifacts

A kiln structure is discovered on the site's southern slope, featuring a central column—similar to kilns found at Kanmer (Gujarat) and Mohenjo-daro.

The wedge-shaped bricks are also unearthed, which likely served in constructing circular walls and kilns, along with typical Harappan-style bricks.

Major Harappan Sites

Site	Present Day
Harappa	Punjab, Pakistan
Mohenjo-Daro	Sindh, Pakistan
Dholavira	Kutch district of Gujarat,
Kalibangan	Rajasthan
Lothal	Gujarat
Rakhigarhi	Haryana
Chanhudaro	Sindh, Pakistan
Ganweriwala	Punjab, Pakistan
Sutkagendor	Baluchistan Province, Pakistan
Alamgirpur	Uttar Pradesh



Digital Payments Index

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that its Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) surged to 493.22 in March 2025, up from 465.33 in September 2024.
 - The latest increase is primarily driven by improvements in Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors – and Payment Performance.

About

- The RBI-DPI was introduced in **2021**, the index is published **semi-annually** and is based on **March 2018** as the base period (Index = 100).
- To track the extent of digitalisation in payments across the country.
- The consistent upward trend reflects India's rapid adoption of digital payment systems, spanning both urban and rural areas

Word of the day

Exculpatory:

clearing of guilt or blame

Synonyms: acquit, clear, discharge, exonerate

Usage: The exculpatory evidence was ignored.

Pronunciation: newsth.live/

exculpatorypro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /ɪksˈkʌl.pə.tɹi/, /ɪksˈkʌl.pə.tə.ɹi/

