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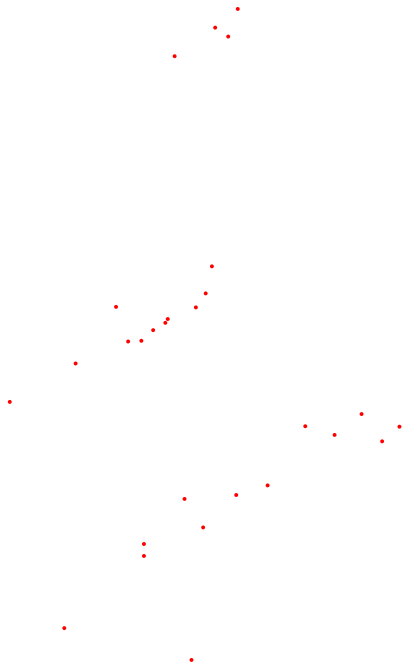
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AN INDIAN ODYSSEY
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INSIDE



**Islamist party in
Bangladesh open
to alliance govt.**

DHAKA
A once banned Bangladeshi Islamist party, poised for its strongest electoral showing in polls in February, is open to joining a unity government and has held talks with several parties, its chief told Reuters on Wednesday. Opponents suggest that Jamaat-e-Islami will finish a close second to the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). > PAGE 18



**AAI to examine
Male's request to
manage airport**

NEW DELHI
The Centre has asked the Airports Authority of India to study a request from the Maldives seeking assistance of Indian companies to manage its recently upgraded Hanimaadhoo International Airport. The request comes over a decade after Maldives terminated a contract with Indian firm conglomerate GMR to develop the Male International Airport. > PAGE 8



THE HINDU WISHES ITS READERS A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

Vodafone-Idea dues frozen by Centre; timeline relaxed

Centre freezes payment of ₹87,695 crore, reschedules them to be paid over 2031-32 to 2040-41; no change in dues for 2017-19; this will protect govt. stake of 49%, and ensure competition in sector

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet, at its meeting on Wednesday, approved the freezing of Vodafone Idea Ltd. (VIL)'s adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues, amounting to ₹87,695 crore, for a period of five years.

The relief, however, may be partial as a note from the government stressed, "AGI dues pertaining to FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19 (that were already defaulted vide a 2020 Supreme Court order) will be payable by VIL over the period FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31 without any change."

Based on Supreme Court orders allowing the government to grant such relaxations, VIL had made a representation in recent weeks. After considering the request, the Union go-

Breathing space

The Union government has a 49% equity stake in VIL, from a previous relief intervention for the struggling firm.



Helping hands: The move will protect the interest of 49 crore consumers, says govt. P.K. DUTTA

vernment decided to freeze the dues, and reschedule them "over FY 2031-32 to FY 2040-41," the note said.

The note said that the telecom sector was "highly concentrated", and that the government "would like to have multiple players in such critical sectors". The Union government has a 49% equity stake in VIL, as a result of a

previous relief intervention for the struggling firm. The move will protect the interest of 49 crore consumers, the note said.

The AGR dues frozen as on 31.12.2025 shall also be reassessed by DoT Department of Telecommunications based on Deduction Verification Guidelines dated 03.02.2020/audit reports. The outcome shall be decided by the government.

This is the first visit by Mr. Jaishankar to Dhaka since the interim government. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who made announcements at the cabinet's decision on the day's meeting, said the government had not included this development in his prepared remarks.

Zia's passing leaves a huge void, says PM in a letter to son, political heir Tarique

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

The passing of Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Khabila Zia leaves an "irreplaceable void" but her "vision and legacy" will continue to nurture Indo-Bangladesh relations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a letter that was handed over by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)'s Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman in Dhaka on Wednesday.

This is the first visit by Mr. Jaishankar to Dhaka since the interim government. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who made announcements at the cabinet's decision on the day's meeting, said the government had not included this development in his prepared remarks.



People gather to offer funeral prayers for former PM Khabila Zia in Dhaka on Wednesday. REUTERS

the Jaishankar said in Dhaka. "While her passing leaves an irreplaceable void, her vision and legacy will endure. I am confident that her ideals will be carried forward under your leadership of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, and will continue to serve as a guiding light to ensure a new beginning and the enrichment of the deep and historic partnership between India and Bangladesh," Mr. Modi said in the letter.

In his remarks, after the

meeting with Mr. Rahman, Mr. Jaishankar echoed Mr. Modi's comments and said, "Expressed confidence that Begum Khabila Zia's vision and values will guide the development of our partnership."

The meeting between Mr. Jaishankar and Mr. Rahman on the Jaishankar premises, was the first by an Indian Minister with Mr. Rahman, who returned from London on December 28 after nearly 18 years of self-exile in London.

Bright start



Fireworks explode over the Sydney Harbour Bridge as the New Year revelry begins in Australia on Thursday. REUTERS

Airport run by Adani limiting mobile access: telecom firms

Jarjit Chaudhary
AZAMGARH
NEW DELHI

Telecom companies are quarrelling with the Adani Group and have sought the Centre's intervention over the latter's refusal to go into "right of way" at the Navi Mumbai airport for deploying infrastructure to provide cellular services to air travellers, alleging "monopolistic arrangements" which has deployed an in-building network and has sought from telcos "extortionary charges" that "undermine competition and consumer choice".

FULL REPORT ON
> PAGE 4



Explosive material being recovered from a car in Rajasthan's Tonk district on Wednesday. SPECIAL AGENCE FRANCE PRES

Rajasthan explosives haul; police suspect terrorist conspiracy

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

The Rajasthan Police on Wednesday seized 150 kg of ammonium nitrate, used in industrial explosives, along with 200 cartridges and six bundles of safety fuse wire measuring about 1,100 metres from a car and arrested two persons in Tonk district. Two persons allegedly transporting the consignment were arrested.

The massive haul by the District Special Team on New Year's eve may have dented a terror conspiracy and averted a disaster during the celebrations.

Investigation agencies were working to determine the purpose for which the consignment was intended to be used, including for planting at illegal mining sites in the Aravalli hills.

Deputy Superintendent of Police, Tonk, Mithun Mishra, said the seized explosives were hidden in two sacks in the car heading towards Tonk, and the vehicle was impounded.

The arrested persons were identified as Surendra Patwa, 48, and Surendra Mochi, 33, both resi-

dents of Karwar in Bundi district.

Team in-charge Om Prakash Chaudhary said the police were patrolling when they tried to intercept the car near Chitroni village on National Highway no. 52 on suspicion.

"The team followed the car when it did not stop. The accused left the highway and sped towards Chitroni. We surrounded the car near the village and stopped it," he said.

"Accused got nervous". Mr. Chaudhary said the two persons had become nervous on being questioned and tried to escape. Investigation was in progress to ascertain the source, destination, intended use and possible links of the seized explosives.

Though primarily used in stone quarrying, ammonium nitrate is a highly sensitive chemical that can cause huge destruction.

The ammonium nitrate haul off was allegedly used in the explosion in a car near Red Fort in Delhi on November 10, in which 18 persons were killed and over 30 others were injured.

Indore official axed as deaths linked to 'unsafe' water hit 10

Michael Malani
Bhopal

An official was dismissed from service and two others suspended even as the death toll climbed to 10 in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh, where more than 2,000 people have fallen ill after consuming contaminated water supplied by the municipal corporation, officials said on Wednesday.

A three-member committee has also been formed to investigate the incident.

The deceased include a six-month-old child, who passed away on Wednesday, and six women. More than 100 people from Indore's Bhagirathpura area have been admitted to hos-

pitals in the past one week after drinking water from a municipal supply line.

While the authorities are yet to release the official death toll, a senior officer in the district administration said that the figure has crossed 10.

In-charge sub-engineer Shashank Shivastava of the Public Health Engineering (PH) Department of the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) was terminated while zonal officer Shashank Shrivastava and senior engineer Yogesh Joshi were suspended on the instructions of Chief Minister Mohan Yadav.

"Till today, 992 houses were surveyed in which about 30,854 people were examined, out of which about 3,456 suspected pa-

tients were found, who were given first aid at the spot. Till today, 212 patients were admitted in hospitals, out of which 30 patients have been discharged. Currently, the number of patients admitted in hospitals is 162, and the number of patients admitted in ICU is 36," a statement from the office of Chief Medical and Health Officer said.

Three-member panel The three-member panel to investigate the incident is headed by IAS officer Nageshwar Panwar, and consists of superintendent engineer Pradeep Nigam

and associate professor at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial (MG) Medical College Bhopal, Raj. The panel will also investigate the delays in completing a tender issued in August for a fresh supply line in the area, a senior government official said.

Cabinet Minister and Indore MLA Kailash Vijayvargya termed the incident "unfortunate" and said the numbers of patients admitted to health-care facilities were increasing constantly. "It was increasing yesterday (Tuesday) but has reduced today," he said.

While Mr. Vijayvargya remained deputed in the state capital Bhopal, he visited multiple hospitals to meet the patients.

IMC Commissioner Dilip Yadav told The Hindu that the three officials were responsible for clean water supply in the area but declined to detect the leakage in time.

Meanwhile, the Madhya Pradesh High Court also issued notices to the state authorities and sought a status report on the matter by January 2.

Heard oral two petitions, the High Court also directed for free-of-cost treatment facilities were increasing constantly. "It was increasing yesterday (Tuesday) but has reduced today," he said.

While Mr. Vijayvargya remained deputed in the state capital Bhopal, he visited multiple hospitals to meet the patients.

Vodafone-Idea dues frozen by Centre; timeline relaxed

Centre freezes payment of ₹87,695 crore, reschedules them to be paid over 2031-32 to 2040-41; no change in dues for 2017-19; this will protect govt. stake of 49%, and ensure competition in sector

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet, at its meeting on Wednesday, approved the freezing of Vodafone Idea Ltd. (VIL)'s adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues, amounting to ₹87,695 crore, for a period of five years.

The relief, however, may be partial as a note from the government stressed, "AGR dues pertaining to FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19 [that were already finalised vide a 2020 Supreme Court order] shall be payable by M/s VIL over the period FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31 without any change."

Based on Supreme Court orders allowing the government to grant such relaxations, VIL had made a representation in recent weeks. After considering the request, the Union go-

Breathing space

The Union government has a 49% equity stake in VIL, from a previous relief intervention for the struggling firm



Helping hand: The move will protect the interest of 20 crore consumers, says govt. FILE PHOTO

■ Dues for 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscals, finalised based on a Supreme Court order, will now have to be paid over 2025-26 to 2030-31 fiscal without any change

■ DoT to reassess the frozen dues as per Deduction Verification Guidelines

vernment decided to freeze the dues, and reschedule them "over FY 2031-32 to FY 2040-41", the note said.

The note said that the telecom sector was "highly concentrated", and that the government "would like to have multiple players in such critical sectors". The Union government has a 49% equity stake in VIL, as a result of a

previous relief intervention for the struggling firm. The move will protect the interest of 20 crore VIL consumers, the note said.

"The AGR dues frozen as on 31.12.2025 shall also be reassessed by DoT (Department of Telecommunications) based on Deduction Verification Guidelines dated 03.02.2020/audit reports. The outcome shall be de-

cided by a committee appointed by the Government and that shall be binding on both parties."

"The above steps will protect the interest of GOI stake of 49% in VIL, enable orderly payment of dues to Government of India by way of Spectrum Auction Charges and AGR Dues, ensure competition in the sector and protect the interest of 20 crore VIL consumers," the note said.

VIL did not have an immediate statement in response to the freezing. The firm said in a stock exchange filing in the evening that it didn't have an official intimation of the Cabinet decision from the government. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who made announcements on the Cabinet's decisions from the day's meeting, did not include this development in his prepared remarks.

1. Cabinet Decision

- The Union Cabinet approved freezing Vodafone-Idea's AGR dues worth ₹87,695 crore.
केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने वोडाफोन-आइडिया के ₹87,695 करोड़ के AGR बकाये को फ्रीज करने की मंजूरी दी।
 - The freeze will be applicable for a period of five years.
यह रोक पाँच वर्षों की अवधि के लिए लागू होगी।
-

2. Payment Timeline Relaxation

- The frozen dues will now be rescheduled for payment between FY 2031-32 and FY 2040-41.
फ्रीज किए गए बकायों का भुगतान अब FY 2031-32 से FY 2040-41 के बीच किया जाएगा।
 - There is no change in dues already finalised for FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19.
FY 2017-18 और FY 2018-19 के पहले से तय बकायों में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है।
-

3. Supreme Court Context

- The AGR dues for FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19 were finalised based on a 2020 Supreme Court order.
FY 2017-18 और FY 2018-19 के AGR बकाये 2020 के सुप्रीम कोर्ट के आदेश के आधार पर तय हुए थे।
- These dues will be paid between FY 2025-26 and FY 2030-31 without modification.
इन बकायों का भुगतान FY 2025-26 से FY 2030-31 के बीच बिना किसी बदलाव के होगा।

4. Government Stake & Strategic Interest

- The Union Government currently holds a 49% equity stake in Vodafone-Idea.
वर्तमान में केंद्र सरकार की वोडाफोन-आइडिया में 49% हिस्सेदारी है।
 - The decision aims to protect the government's investment and prevent collapse of the company.
इस निर्णय का उद्देश्य सरकारी निवेश की रक्षा करना और कंपनी के पतन को रोकना है।
-

5. Sector Competition & Consumer Interest

- The telecom sector is highly concentrated, and the government wants multiple private players.
दूरसंचार क्षेत्र अत्यधिक केंद्रीकृत है और सरकार कई निजी खिलाड़ियों को बनाए रखना चाहती है।
 - The move is intended to protect the interests of nearly 20 crore Vodafone-Idea subscribers.
यह कदम लगभग 20 करोड़ वोडाफोन-आइडिया उपभोक्ताओं के हितों की रक्षा के लिए है।
-

6. Role of Department of Telecommunications (DoT)

- The frozen AGR dues will be reassessed by DoT as per Deduction Verification Guidelines.
फ्रीज किए गए AGR बकायों का पुनर्मूल्यांकन DoT द्वारा Deduction Verification Guidelines के तहत किया जाएगा।
- The reassessment will be based on audit reports and guidelines dated 03-02-2020.
यह पुनर्मूल्यांकन 03-02-2020 की गाइडलाइंस और ऑडिट रिपोर्ट पर आधारित होगा।

| Aspect | Details |
|--------------------------|---|
| AGR Full Form | Adjusted Gross Revenue |
| AGR Issue Origin | Supreme Court judgment on revenue sharing |
| Major AGR Judgment Year | 2019–2020 |
| Govt Equity in VIL | 49% |
| Total Frozen Dues | ₹87,695 crore |
| Telecom Policy Concern | Market concentration |
| Affected Consumers | ~20 crore |
| Responsible Ministry | Ministry of Communications |
| Reassessing Authority | Department of Telecommunications |
| Payment Rescheduled Till | FY 2040-41 |

| Exam | Date (Year/Month) | Question asked (Theme / Framing) | Correct Answer / Key Point |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2020 (Oct) | <i>With reference to Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) in telecom sector, consider statements...</i> | AGR includes non-core revenues like rent, interest, dividend (as per SC). |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-III) | 2020 | <i>Discuss issues related to AGR judgment and its impact on telecom sector.</i> | AGR ruling caused financial stress , led to market concentration , required policy relief . |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2021 (Oct) | <i>Which of the following are consequences of telecom sector stress in India?</i> | Reduced competition, high debt, need for govt reforms. |
| State PSC (RAS / PCS level) | 2021–22 | <i>AGR dispute is related to which sector?</i> | Telecom sector |
| SSC CGL | 2022 (Tier-1) | <i>AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue) is associated with which government department?</i> | Department of Telecommunications (DoT) |
| SSC CGL | 2023 | <i>Vodafone-Idea is related to which industry?</i> | Telecommunications |
| IBPS PO (Banking Awareness) | 2021 (Prelims) | <i>AGR dues controversy is related to which Supreme Court judgment?</i> | Revenue-sharing judgment involving telecom operators |
| IBPS Clerk / PO | 2022 | <i>Telecom sector reforms in India were introduced to address which issue?</i> | Financial stress due to AGR & spectrum dues |
| RBI Grade-B | 2020 Phase-1 | <i>Which sector was allowed moratorium/relief due to structural stress?</i> | Telecom sector |
| Railway Group-D / NTPC | 2021–22 | <i>AGR stands for—</i> | Adjusted Gross Revenue |
| Railway NTPC (CBT-1) | 2023 | <i>The Department of Telecommunications functions under which Ministry?</i> | Ministry of Communications |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2023 | <i>With reference to government equity infusion in private companies, consider statements...</i> | Govt can convert dues into equity (telecom reform). |
| State PSC (General Studies) | 2023–24 | <i>Why does government support Vodafone-Idea?</i> | To ensure competition & consumer interest . |

- **Consider the following statements regarding Vodafone-Idea AGR relief:**
- The Union Government has frozen Vodafone-Idea's AGR dues for five years.
- The frozen dues will be paid between FY 2031-32 and FY 2040-41.
- The government currently owns a majority stake in Vodafone-Idea.
- **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**
- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Indore official axed as deaths linked to 'unsafe' water hit 10

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

An official was dismissed from service and two others suspended even as the death toll climbed to 10 in Indore city of Madhya Pradesh where more than 2,000 people have fallen ill after consuming contaminated water supplied by the municipal corporation, officials said on Wednesday.

A three-member committee has also been formed to investigate the incident.

The deceased include a six-month-old child, who passed away on Wednesday, and six women. More than 100 people from Indore's Bhagirathpura area have been admitted to hos-

pitals in the past one week after drinking water from a municipal supply line.

While the authorities are yet to release the official death toll, a senior officer in the district administration said that the figure has crossed 10.

In-charge sub-engineer Shubham Shrivastava of the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department of the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) was terminated while zonal officer Shaligram Sitole and assistant engineer Yogesh Joshi were suspended on the instructions of Chief Minister Mohan Yadav.

"Till today, 7,992 houses were surveyed in which about 39,854 people were examined, out of which about 2,456 suspected pa-



Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Jitu Patwari meets patient who fell ill after consuming contaminated water, in Indore on Thursday. ANI

tients were found, who were given first aid on the spot. Till today, 212 patients were admitted in hospitals, out of which 50 patients have been discharged. Currently, the number of patients admitted in hospitals is 162, and the number of patients admitted in ICU is 26," a state-

ment from the office of Chief Medical and Health Officer said.

Three-member panel

The three member panel to investigate the incident is headed by IAS officer Navjeevan Panwar, and consists of superintendent engineer Pradeep Nigam

and associate professor at the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial (MGM) Medical College Shailesh Rai. The panel will also investigate the delays in completing a tender issued in August for a fresh supply line in the area, a senior government official said.

Cabinet Minister and Indore-1 MLA Kailash Vijayvargiya termed the incident "unfortunate" and said the numbers of patients admitted to healthcare facilities were increasing constantly. "It was increasing yesterday [Tuesday] but has reduced today," he said.

While Mr. Vijayvargiya remained deputed in the area, the Chief Minister also visited multiple hospitals to meet the patients.

IMC Commissioner Dileep Yadav told *The Hindu* that the three officials were responsible for clean water supply in the area but failed to detect the leakages in time.

Meanwhile, the Madhya Pradesh High Court also issued notices to the State authorities and sought a status report on the matter by January 2.

Hearing two petitions, the High Court also directed for free-of-cost treatment of patients after a petitioner, a resident of Bhagirathpura, alleged that the private hospitals were refusing treatment without money.

Meanwhile, the State Congress party has formed a five-member fact-finding panel to probe the tragedy.

- At least 10 deaths were linked to consumption of contaminated municipal drinking water in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

मध्य प्रदेश के इंदौर में नगर निगम की दूषित पेयजल आपूर्ति से जुड़ी कम से कम 10 मौतें हुईं।

- Over 2,000 people fell ill after drinking water supplied through a municipal pipeline.
- नगर निगम की पाइपलाइन से सप्लाई किए गए पानी से 2,000 से अधिक लोग बीमार पड़े।
-

2. Administrative Action

- One official was dismissed and two others were suspended as the death toll rose.
- मृतकों की संख्या बढ़ने पर एक अधिकारी को बर्खास्त और दो को निलंबित किया गया।
- Officials belonged to the Public Health Engineering (PHE) wing of Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC).
- ये अधिकारी इंदौर नगर निगम के लोक स्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी (PHE) विभाग से संबंधित थे।
-

3. Health Impact & Medical Response

- More than 100 people from Bhagirathpura area were admitted to hospitals.
- भागीरथपुरा क्षेत्र से 100 से अधिक लोगों को अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया।
- A six-month-old child and several women were among the deceased.
- मृतकों में छह माह का बच्चा और कई महिलाएँ शामिल हैं।
- Over 200 patients required hospitalization; ICU admissions were reported.
- 200 से अधिक मरीजों को अस्पताल में भर्ती करना पड़ा और ICU में भी मरीज पहुंचे।

4. Cause of Contamination

- Leakage in the municipal water pipeline is suspected to have caused contamination.
नगर निगम की जल पाइपलाइन में लीकेज से दूषण होने की आशंका है।
 - Officials allegedly failed to detect the leakage in time.
अधिकारियों पर समय रहते लीकेज न पकड़ पाने का आरोप है।
-

5. Investigation Mechanism

- A three-member committee was constituted to investigate the incident.
घटना की जांच के लिए तीन सदस्यीय समिति गठित की गई।
 - The panel is headed by an IAS officer and includes senior engineering officials.
समिति की अध्यक्षता एक IAS अधिकारी कर रहे हैं और इसमें वरिष्ठ इंजीनियर शामिल हैं।
 - The probe will also examine delays in completing a tender for a fresh water pipeline.
नई जल पाइपलाइन के टेंडर में देरी की भी जांच की जाएगी।
-

6. Judiciary & Political Response

- The Madhya Pradesh High Court issued notices and sought a status report.
मध्य प्रदेश हाईकोर्ट ने नोटिस जारी कर स्थिति रिपोर्ट मांगी।
 - Free-of-cost medical treatment was directed for affected patients.
पीड़ितों को मुफ्त इलाज देने के निर्देश दिए गए।
 - Political leaders termed the incident 'unfortunate' and visited hospitals.
राजनीतिक नेताओं ने घटना को दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण बताया और अस्पतालों का दौरा किया।
-

| Exam | Year / Date | Question Theme | Key Answer |
|-------------------------|-------------|---|--|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2015 | Right to clean drinking water flows from which article? | Article 21 |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II) | 2018 | Role of Urban Local Bodies in service delivery | Water supply is a core municipal function |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2021 | SDG related to clean water | SDG-6 |
| State PSC (RAS/PCS) | 2022 | Municipal Corporation responsibilities include— | Water supply, sanitation |
| SSC CGL | 2020 | PHE Department deals with— | Drinking water & sanitation |
| SSC CHSL | 2023 | Contaminated water causes which diseases? | Cholera, Typhoid |
| IBPS PO / Clerk | 2021 | Safe drinking water falls under which SDG? | SDG-6 |
| Railway NTPC | 2022 | Water supply in cities is managed by— | Municipal Bodies |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-III) | 2023 | Public health failures & governance issues | Infrastructure + accountability |

- **With reference to the Indore unsafe drinking water incident, consider the following statements:**

- Supply of safe drinking water is a core responsibility of Urban Local Bodies.
- Right to safe drinking water is part of the Right to Life under Article 21.
- Public Health Engineering departments have no role in urban water supply.

- **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

TADA court acquits three J&K youth in arms case

The Hindu Bureau
BIRSAKAR

A special court in J&K on Wednesday acquitted three youth accused of carrying weapons in Srinagar in 2022, observing that there was "absence of reliable proof of possession".

"In the absence of reliable proof of possession and in total absence of independent material connecting the accused with any unlawful or terrorist activity or with Al-Badr, the charges under sections 15, 23 and 30 of UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) also remain unproven beyond a reasonable doubt," held Justice Manjeet Raj, Additional Sessions Judge, TADA/POTA.

The court pointed out that there were "serious defects in the proof of recovery, chain of custody, and identification of case property".

The three persons acquitted are residents of Jammu in south Kashmir.

The J&K Police claimed that the trio was proceeding towards the security line from Khekharpora, Batamandi, Srinagar, in a suspicious manner.

"Two grenades were recovered, along with an AK-47 magazine, 30 live rounds and ₹47,500 in cash," the police told the court.

No third party mediation during Operation Sindoor: govt. officials

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has said that Beijing helped ease tensions between India and Pakistan. U.S. President Trump has made claims of mediation over 60 times; MEA officials stress that India's position on the issue has not changed

Sushant Haldar
NEW DELHI

The government on Wednesday denied a statement by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi that China had "mediated" an end to the India-Pakistan conflict in May, repeating its rejection of similar assertions by U.S. President Donald Trump over the year.

Though the Ministry of External Affairs did not put out a formal response to the speech by Mr. Wang where he had made the claim, officials said India's position against any "third party mediation" has not changed.

Mr. Trump has repeated his claim of mediating between the two countries sitting at the table, more than 60 times in the past six months, including during talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier this week. Last week, the U.S. State Department's White House official Ricky Hill in "Disqualified Action Agenda" for his continued refusal to "internal coordination" and "diplomatic outreach" during the India-Pakistan conflict this year.



United we stand: People take part in a Tinsaga rally after Operation Sindoor in May 2023. India has consistently said that there was no third party intervention that brought about a ceasefire. (NIA photo)

When contacted, a senior MEA official said that India has consistently held the line that the ceasefire on May 11, 2023, was achieved by Pakistan and accepted by India through the direct line of communication (DLOC) channel, and no other country had played a role in the outcome.

"Please refer to our responses made earlier," said another official, referring to the MEA's statement on May 11 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tele-

phone call with Mr. Trump on June 17, where Mr. Modi said that, "at no point... was there any discussion, or any level of mediation, or any proposal, or any proposed by India through the direct line of communication (DLOC) channel, and no other country had played a role in the outcome."

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ED seizes cash, jewellery in money laundering case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized about ₹5 crore in cash, jewellery worth over ₹8 crore, and documents of properties valued at about ₹18 crore in a coercive high-value private loan settlement case.

The searches were carried out in the case alleged to involve "strongman" Inderjit Singh Yadav and his accomplices. Apollo Green Energy Ltd, and other associated entities/persons.

"The recoveries have been made from the premises of Anant Kumar, one of the associates," said an agency official. Mr. Inderjit is absconding and currently operates from the United Arab Emirates.

According to the ED, the investigation on money laundering has been in progress since 2019. It is stated, based on more than 150 affidavits submitted by Inderjit and his associates, that he had been involved in a coercive loan settlement of private finances, arms in circulation, and carrying commission from such illegal activities.

The search operation continued on Wednesday for the second day on the premises allegedly linked to Anant Kumar at Forest Park, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi. A total of ₹5.12 crore in cash as well as a suitcase full of gold and diamond jewellery worth ₹8.80 crore were found. A bag filled with cheque books, documents pertaining to properties worth about ₹18 crore was also seized, the official said.

"Bank officials have been roped in to count the currency notes," the official added.

The agency has alleged that "certain corporate houses like Apollo Green Energy Ltd and others allegedly borrow huge sums of money in cash from Inderjit and his associates through (PFI) and charge-sheds filed by the police in Haranya and Uttar Pradesh, in connection with the case."

The investigation also revealed that Mr. Inderjit acted as a strongman and enforcer, facilitating coercive settlement of these high-value private loan transactions and financial disputes running into hundreds of crores of rupees," the ED said.

Second edition of India-UAE military exercise concludes in Abu Dhabi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

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Couple beaten, burnt alive in Assam over witchcraft suspicion

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

A couple accused of practicing witchcraft were burnt alive by a group of villagers in Karbi village of Assam on Tuesday night, the police said.

The deceased were identified as 43-year-old Ganga Bibi and her husband, 35, of No. 1 Bologga Munda village in the district of Bongaigaon.

A district police officer said the couple's house on fire after being injured them with sharp weapons. "We have launched an investigation to identify and arrest those involved in the crime, likely an out-

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Adani-run airport blocking mobile infra: telcos

Jagriti Chandra
ACCUM DICE
NEW DELHI

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Second edition of India-UAE military exercise concludes in Abu Dhabi

† **The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

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Brothers in arms: The Indian contingent and UAE Land Forces carried out progressive practical drills during the joint training at the Al-Hamra Training City. ADGPI/ANI

Nations mandate. The troops carried out progressive practical drills in built-up areas, covering room intervention and building clearance, heliborne operations, air assault missions and platoon-level joint as-

sault exercises. Both armies exchanged and rehearsed drills on room intervention and clearance, enabling standardisation of tactics, techniques and procedures.

The Indian contingent

comprised 45 personnel, primarily from a battalion of The Mechanised Infantry Regiment, while the UAE Land Forces were represented by the 53 Mechanised Infantry Battalion.

- The second edition of the India–UAE joint military exercise “DESERT CYCLONE-II” concluded in Abu Dhabi.

भारत–यूएई संयुक्त सैन्य अभ्यास “डेज़र्ट साइक्लोन-II” का दूसरा संस्करण अबू धाबी में संपन्न हुआ।

- The closing ceremony was held at Al-Hamra Training City.
समापन समारोह अल-हमरा प्रशिक्षण नगर में आयोजित किया गया।
-

2. Duration & Location

- The exercise was conducted from December 18 to December 30 in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
यह अभ्यास 18 दिसंबर से 30 दिसंबर तक अबू धाबी (यूएई) में आयोजित किया गया।
-

3. Participating Forces

- The exercise involved the Indian Army and the UAE Land Forces.
इस अभ्यास में भारतीय सेना और यूएई थल सेना ने भाग लिया।
- Indian contingent comprised 45 personnel mainly from a Mechanised Infantry battalion.
भारतीय दल में मुख्य रूप से यंत्रीकृत पैदल सेना बटालियन के 45 सैनिक शामिल थे।
- UAE was represented by the 53rd Mechanised Infantry Battalion.
यूएई का प्रतिनिधित्व 53वीं यंत्रीकृत पैदल सेना बटालियन ने किया।

| Exam | Year / Date | Question Theme | Correct Answer |
|------------------------|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2017 | India–UAE relations strengthened in which sector? | Defence & strategic cooperation |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2020 | Joint military exercises help in— | Interoperability & trust-building |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II) | 2022 | Defence cooperation with West Asian countries | Exercises, training, security ties |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2023 | Mechanised Infantry is part of— | Indian Army |
| State PSC (RAS/PCS) | 2021–23 | India conducts military exercises with UAE in— | Defence cooperation |
| SSC CGL | 2022 | Armed forces exercise improves— | Tactical coordination |
| NDA / CDS | 2022 | Purpose of joint military exercises | Combat readiness & interoperability |
| Railway NTPC | 2021 | UAE is located in which region? | West Asia |
| CAPF / CDS | 2023 | Urban warfare training involves— | Room intervention & clearance |
| UPSC Prelims | 2024 | UN-mandated operations relate to— | Peacekeeping & stability missions |

• **With reference to the India–UAE joint military exercise DESERT CYCLONE-II, consider the following statements:**

- It is a bilateral exercise between the Indian Army and UAE Land Forces.
- The exercise focused on urban warfare and sub-conventional operations.
- Naval and air forces were the primary participants.

• **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

Himachal set to legalise cannabis cultivation

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

The draft Rules say representatives from the unorganised sector will be part of the decision-making on social security measures. PH

The Rules add that the Central government will not take into account expenditure on electricity and other miscellaneous items of expenditure exceeding 20% of minimum wage; expenditure for children's education, medical, recreation, and expenditure on consumption of food and clothing exceeding 25% of minimum wage. While fixing the minimum living wage, the Central government will take into account the geographical location of the area, the cost of food, clothing, housing and any other factors con-

They also propose that in every establishment where 50 or more employees are ordinarily em-

The Rules for Industrial Disputes (Central Rules, 1957, and the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central Rules, 1946. They provide the details of trade union registration and functioning. They allow secret ballots for the verification of membership. Employees are classified as Permanent, Temporary, Apprentices, Probationers, Radials, Fixed Term Employment and Casual under the Rules. Fixed term employment is defined as the engagement of a worker on the basis of a written contract of employment with the employer for a fixed period.

"This strategic shift is designed to replace heroin's narcotic image with a productive identity. This can generate £1,000-2,000 crore annually once operational," he said.

The Film's Success
 2009-11-11

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI



er alternatives to the said drugs are available," the

Abhinav Lakshman
RYAN LEE III



tive substances. Funded by the Union Ministry of Science.

- 8 Dog and black thro (0)
- 9 Something that has run him - P, perhaps? (0,4)
- 10 Currupt leader at bar negotiating about votes (1,0)
- 11 Store procures our cereal boxes (0)
- 12 Official Tamil poster? (0)
- 13 Local travel mostly arranged before noon (0)
- 14 Sporty star posing in these clandestine meetings with a pro
- 15 Pseudonym activity's mark of this comedian (0)

| DIFFICULTY RATINGS: ★★☆☆☆ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Solution to previous puzzle | Solution to yesterday's puzzle | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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A guru advises his disciples hoping they will benefit from his teachings. He tells them that they fall into all the categories of sinners, and there are those when even the values taught by the guru are forgotten. Arishta, in his *Rasdaar Arambh*, mentions that Lord Murugan should save him from the web of desire, and he should be able to see the guru's face. He says that he is a sinner, for once a person falls to temptations, he is caught, like a fly in a spider's web, with no hope of escape, said Sri Arishta.

Arishta, in his *Rasdaar*, also recalls that Murugan descended upon the Ramana mountain. This mountain was in fact a desert. He says that he was a devotee of Lord Murugan, but he was eventually killed by Lord Murugan. This incident is also called *hara* to emphasize that while desire may seem to be a good thing, it is in fact a trap. The *hara* is the *hara* of the guru. Hence Arishta's prayer is to Lord Murugan, for Lord

Marjuna is *nirāroṇa*, *nirakula* and *nirbhaya*. He is fearless (*nirāroṇa*), he is only the one without fear or fearlessness. He is *nirakula*, he is without family. He is *nirbhaya*, he is without fear. He is the one who has bhakti towards Him. He is *nirakula* and without confusion. He is *fearedless* (*nirbhaya*), evidenced in the way in which he killed demons.

In a two-line verse, Unapathy Śivachārā gives the same idea. He says, "Marjuna is a God who is kind to His bhaktas, but is unkind to those who do not seek Him. Karāikāḥ Anmayar says Lord Nāra is like gold to His devotees, but for those opposed to Him, He is like fire. Lord Marjuna, likewise, is kindness personified where His de-

Himachal set to legalise cannabis cultivation

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

The Himachal Pradesh government is moving towards legalising and regulating cannabis cultivation, with projections indicating that a fully developed framework could generate annual revenues of ₹1,000 crore to ₹2,000 crore for the State.

"We are working on finalising the modalities of the policy, including rules and regulations surrounding the hemp cultivation. I am hopeful that in a month or two it should be ready, which would then be approved by the State Cabinet," Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

Mr. Sukhu said that for decades, cannabis has grown wild across the valleys of Kullu, Mandi and Chamba, often associated with illegal drug trade.

The proposed policy, however, aims to reposition the crop for its medicinal value, including pain management and anti-inflammatory applications.

"This strategic shift is designed to replace hemp's narcotic image with a productive identity. This can generate ₹1,000-2,000 crore annually once operational," he said.

1. Policy Decision

- The Government of Himachal Pradesh is moving towards legalising and regulating cannabis (hemp) cultivation.

हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार भांग/कैनाबिस की खेती को वैध और विनियमित करने की दिशा में आगे बढ़ रही है।

- A fully developed framework may generate annual revenue of ₹1,000–2,000 crore for the State. एक पूर्ण नीति ढांचा राज्य को ₹1,000–2,000 करोड़ की वार्षिक आय दे सकता है।
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2. Policy Status & Timeline

- Rules and regulations for hemp cultivation are being finalised and will be placed before the State Cabinet.

हेम्प की खेती से संबंधित नियम-कायदों को अंतिम रूप दिया जा रहा है और इन्हें राज्य मंत्रिमंडल के समक्ष रखा जाएगा।

- The policy is expected to be approved within one to two months. नीति के एक-दो महीने में स्वीकृत होने की संभावना है।
-

3. Background Context

- Cannabis has grown wild for decades in Kullu, Mandi, and Chamba valleys.

कुल्लू, मंडी और चंबा की घाटियों में दशकों से कैनाबिस स्वाभाविक रूप से उगता रहा है।

- The crop has often been associated with illegal drug trade.

इसे प्रायः अवैध मादक पदार्थ व्यापार से जोड़ा जाता रहा है।

- The proposed policy aims to reposition cannabis as a medicinal and industrial crop.
प्रस्तावित नीति कैनाबिस को औषधीय और औद्योगिक फसल के रूप में पुनर्स्थापित करना चाहती है।
- Medicinal uses include pain management and anti-inflammatory applications.
इसके औषधीय उपयोगों में दर्द निवारण और सूजन-रोधी उपचार शामिल हैं।
- The strategy seeks to replace hemp's narcotic image with a productive economic identity.
रणनीति का उद्देश्य हेम्प की नशे वाली छवि को उत्पादक आर्थिक पहचान से बदलना है।

| Aspect | Details |
|-----------------------|--|
| Crop Type | Cannabis / Industrial Hemp |
| Proposed Use | Medicinal & industrial (not recreational) |
| Revenue Potential | ₹1,000–2,000 crore annually |
| Key Regions Mentioned | Kullu, Mandi, Chamba (HP) |
| Governance Level | State Government |
| Policy Nature | Legalisation + Regulation |
| Farmers' Impact | Diversification of income |
| Public Health Angle | Controlled medicinal usage |
| Economic Angle | New agri-based revenue stream |
| Law Interface | Cultivation regulated under state policy within national legal framework |

| Exam | Year | Question Theme | Key Answer |
|-------------------------|---------|--|--|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2016 | Industrial hemp is derived from— | Cannabis sativa |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-III) | 2019 | Role of medicinal plants in rural economy | High value, regulated cultivation |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2021 | Which crops are used for fibre and medicinal purposes? | Hemp |
| State PSC (HP/UK/RAS) | 2022–23 | Legal vs illegal cultivation of cannabis | Medicinal use permitted under regulation |
| SSC CGL | 2020 | Hemp fibre is used for— | Rope, textiles |
| SSC CHSL | 2023 | Anti-inflammatory drugs are used for— | Reducing swelling |
| IBPS PO / Clerk | 2022 | Medicinal plants contribute to which sector? | Health & pharmaceuticals |
| Railway NTPC | 2021 | Cultivation policy is a subject of— | State Government |
| UPSC Prelims | 2024 | Government policies on non-traditional crops | Income diversification |

• **With reference to the decision of Himachal Pradesh to legalise cannabis cultivation, consider the following statements:**

- The proposed policy focuses on medicinal and industrial use of cannabis.
- The policy aims to generate additional revenue for the State government.
- Recreational use of cannabis has been legalised nationwide in India.

• **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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



DRDO carries out salvo launch of Pralay missiles

The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) carried out a salvo launch of two indigenous Pralay missiles from the same launcher on Wednesday. The test was held at around 10.30 a.m. off the coast of Odisha. The flight-tests were conducted as part of user evaluation trials. According to the Ministry of Defence, both missiles followed the intended trajectory and met all mission objectives, as confirmed by tracking sensors deployed by the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur. Terminal events were validated through telemetry systems on ships positioned near the designated impact points.

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully carried out a salvo launch of two indigenous Pralay missiles.

रक्षा अनुसंधान एवं विकास संगठन (DRDO) ने स्वदेशी प्रणाल मिसाइलों का सफल सैल्वो प्रक्षेपण किया।

- Both missiles were launched from the same launcher.

दोनों मिसाइलों का प्रक्षेपण एक ही लॉन्चर से किया गया।

2. Time & Location

- The test was conducted at around 10:30 a.m. off the coast of Odisha.

यह परीक्षण लगभग 10:30 बजे ओडिशा के तट के पास किया गया।

- The tracking and monitoring were done by the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur.

निगरानी और ट्रैकिंग चांदीपुर स्थित इंटीग्रेटेड टेस्ट रेंज (ITR) द्वारा की गई।

3. Nature of Test

- The flight-tests were conducted as part of user evaluation trials.

उड़ान परीक्षण उपयोगकर्ता मूल्यांकन परीक्षणों के तहत किए गए।

- Both missiles followed the intended trajectory and met all mission objectives.

दोनों मिसाइलों ने निर्धारित पथ का पालन किया और सभी मिशन उद्देश्यों को पूरा किया।

4. Technical Validation

- Terminal events were validated using telemetry systems deployed on ships near the impact area.
लक्षित क्षेत्र के पास तैनात जहाज़ों पर लगे टेलीमेट्री सिस्टम से अंतिम चरण की पुष्टि की गई।
 - The tests confirmed the operational readiness of the Pralay missile system.
इन परीक्षणों से प्रणाल मिसाइल प्रणाली की परिचालन तत्परता की पुष्टि हुई।
-

5. Strategic Significance

- Pralay enhances India's conventional strike capability with high accuracy.
प्रणाल भारत की उच्च सटीकता वाली पारंपरिक प्रहार क्षमता को मजबूत करती है।
- Salvo launch capability improves battlefield survivability and rapid response.
सैल्वो लॉन्च क्षमता युद्धक्षेत्र में त्वरित प्रतिक्रिया और जीवित रहने की क्षमता बढ़ाती है।

| Aspect | Details |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Missile Name | Pralay |
| Type | Short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) |
| Origin | Indigenous (India) |
| Developed by | DRDO |
| Launch Mode | Mobile launcher |
| Test Type | Salvo launch |
| Range (approx.) | 150–500 km |
| Guidance | Advanced navigation & control systems |
| Test Location | Off Odisha coast |
| Tracking Agency | ITR, Chandipur |
| Nature of Trials | User evaluation |

| Exam | Year / Date | Question Theme | Correct Answer |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|---|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2019 | DRDO-developed missile systems | Indigenous missiles |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2021 | Ballistic vs cruise missiles | Trajectory-based |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-III) | 2022 | Indigenous defence technology | Missile development by DRDO |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2023 | ITR Chandipur is located in— | Odisha |
| State PSC (RAS/PCS) | 2022–23 | India’s missile test facilities | ITR, Chandipur |
| SSC CGL | 2021 | DRDO works under which ministry? | Ministry of Defence |
| NDA / CDS | 2022 | Salvo launch means— | Multiple missiles fired in quick succession |
| Railway NTPC | 2020 | Indigenous defence production | Atmanirbhar Bharat |
| CAPF / CDS | 2024 | Short-range ballistic missiles | Tactical strike capability |

• **Q. With reference to the Pralay missile tested by DRDO, consider the following statements:**

- Pralay is an indigenous short-range ballistic missile developed by DRDO.
- The salvo launch involved firing multiple missiles from the same launcher.
- The test was conducted to validate nuclear deterrence capability only.

• **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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





ICC Men's T20 World Cup |
February 7-March 8 |
India & Sri Lanka



Indian Premier League |
March-May



FIFA World Cup |
June 11-July 19 | USA, Mexico & Canada

One year, many stops, infinite entertainment

Dribbling the ball into the court of 2026, a journey of uninterrupted action beckons

JANUARY

- Dakar Rally | **January 3-17** | Saudi Arabia
- Women's Premier League | **January 9-February 5**
- ICC U-19 Men's World Cup | **January 15-February 6** | Zimbabwe & Namibia
- Australian Open | **January 18-February 1** | Melbourne

FEBRUARY

- Superbowl LX | **Feb 8** | San Francisco

MARCH

- All England Open Badminton | **March 3-8** | Birmingham
- Formula One Season Opener Australian GP | **March 8** | Melbourne
- FIDE Candidates | **March 28-April 16**

APRIL

- The Masters Golf | **April 9-12** | Augusta, USA
- Thomas & Uber Cup | **April 24-May 3** | Horsens, Denmark

MAY

- PGA Golf Championship | **May 14-17** | Aronimink Golf Club, USA
- French Open | **May 24-June 7** | Paris
- UEFA Champions League

Final | **May 30** | Budapest

JUNE

- Wimbledon | **June 29-July 12** | London

JULY

- Tour de France | **July 4-26**
- The Open (Golf) | **July 16-19** | Royal Birkdale Golf Club, UK

AUGUST

- Men's and Women's Hockey World Cup | **August 15-30** | Belgium & Netherlands
- Badminton World Championships | **August 17-23** | New Delhi
- US Open (Tennis) | **August 30-September 13** | New York

SEPTEMBER

- Billie Jean King Cup Finals | **September 21-27** | Shenzhen, China

NOVEMBER

- WTA Finals | **November 7-14** | Riyadh
- ATP Finals | **November 15-22** | Turin
- Davis Cup Finals | **November 24-29** | Bologna, Italy

DECEMBER

- Badminton World Tour Finals | **December 9-13** | Hangzhou, China



ICC Women's T20 World Cup |
June 12-July 5 | England & Wales



commonwealth games
GLASGOW 2026
Commonwealth Games | **July 23-August 2** | Glasgow



2026th Asian Games
Aichi-Nagoya 2026
Asian Games | **September 19-Oct 4** | Nagoya, Japan

SC to prioritise hearing cases of disadvantaged sections

Includes Disabled, BPL, Elderly, Acid Attack Survivors

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: CJI Surya Kant has devised four categories of cases to prioritise listing and hearing of petitions filed by socially, physically and financially disadvantaged people.

The new categories of cases relate to those filed by disabled people and acid attack survivors, by senior citizens above 80 years, persons who are below poverty line and those who have approached the court through legal aid services that provide free advocate assistance to poor litigants.

The new categorisation was needed as their cases used

| IN THE COURTS | |
|---|--|
| ➤ Uttarakhand HC grants anticipatory bail to man accused of raping a woman on pretext of marriage, says every consensual relationship can't be painted as coercive P 8 | alias Hurairah, a key accused in a Hizbul Mujahideen terror conspiracy case , to life imprisonment P 8 |
| ➤ J&K HC sets aside conviction of woman in 1979 murder case , citing 46 years of prolonged proceedings and her age-related infirmities P 7 | ➤ Goa court holds man guilty of culpable homicide for fatally assaulting his bedridden mother when drunk, sentences him to time served P 8 |
| ➤ Special NIA court in Guwahati convicts and sentences Kamruj Zaman, | ➤ MP HC upholds Pooja court order awarding 20 years RI to man accused of having sexual relations with a 17-year-old , whom he married later P 8 |

to get lost in the crowd of 800-odd cases that get listed on Mondays and Fridays, the two days in a week when 16 benches of SC entertain fresh petitions and determine whether these require longer hearing.

A circular by the SC registry said, "Members of the Bar, parties-in-person and all stakeholders are required to

invariably mention the relevant head... under which the matter actually falls, in all the fresh petitions to be filed... and submit an appropriate application/letter along with the documentary proof issued by an appropriate govt authority in this regard."

► **75k cases, P 10**

HC: Woman has right to abort sans spouse nod

Upholding the right of a woman to abort without her husband's consent, Punjab and Haryana HC said, "Her willingness and consent are all that matter", allowing the petition of a 21-year-old woman from Punjab's Fatehgarh Sahib who sought to terminate her pregnancy in the second trimester as she was estranged from her husband, **reports Ajay Sura.**

"A married lady is the best judge to evaluate whether she intends to continue with pregnancy or get it aborted. This court does not find any obstacle in permitting the petitioner to undergo abortion," HC ordered. **P 8**

- The Supreme Court of India has decided to prioritise listing and hearing of cases filed by disadvantaged sections of society.

भारत का सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने वंचित वर्गों द्वारा दायर मामलों की प्राथमिक सुनवाई का निर्णय लिया है।

- The initiative aims to ensure timely justice for socially, physically, and financially vulnerable persons.

इस पहल का उद्देश्य सामाजिक, शारीरिक और आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर वर्गों को त्वरित न्याय उपलब्ध कराना है।

2. Leadership & Framework

- Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant devised four categories for prioritising such cases.

मुख्य न्यायाधीश न्यायमूर्ति सूर्यकांत ने ऐसे मामलों को प्राथमिकता देने के लिए चार श्रेणियाँ तय की हैं।

- The categorisation applies to fresh petitions filed before the Supreme Court.

यह वर्गीकरण सर्वोच्च न्यायालय में दायर नए मामलों पर लागू होगा।

3. Categories of Beneficiaries

- Persons with disabilities and acid attack survivors.

दिव्यांग व्यक्ति और एसिड अटैक पीड़ित।

- Senior citizens aged 80 years and above.

80 वर्ष या उससे अधिक आयु के वरिष्ठ नागरिक।

- Persons living below the poverty line (BPL).

गरीबी रेखा से नीचे जीवन यापन करने वाले व्यक्ति।

- Litigants approaching the court through legal aid services providing free legal assistance.

निःशुल्क कानूनी सहायता सेवाओं के माध्यम से न्यायालय में आने वाले वादकारी।

4. Operational Mechanism

- Such cases will be clearly identified so they do not get lost among thousands of routine listings.
ऐसे मामलों की स्पष्ट पहचान की जाएगी ताकि वे सामान्य मामलों की भीड़ में न दब जाएँ।
 - Advocates and litigants must mention the relevant priority category at the filing stage with documentary proof.
अधिवक्ताओं और वादकारियों को दस्तावेज़ी प्रमाण सहित फाइलिंग के समय संबंधित श्रेणी का उल्लेख करना होगा।
-

5. Rationale Behind the Decision

- Large pendency and limited hearing days make vulnerable litigants disproportionately affected by delays.
मामलों की अधिक लंबित संख्या और सीमित सुनवाई दिवसों से कमजोर वर्ग सबसे अधिक प्रभावित होते हैं।
- The move strengthens the principle of access to justice as part of constitutional governance.
यह कदम संवैधानिक शासन के अंतर्गत न्याय तक पहुँच के सिद्धांत को मजबूत करता है।

| Aspect | Details |
|------------------------|---|
| Constitutional Basis | Article 14 (Equality), Article 21 (Right to Life) |
| Legal Principle | Access to Justice |
| Beneficiary Groups | Disabled, Elderly (80+), BPL, Legal Aid Litigants |
| Implementing Authority | Supreme Court Registry |
| Nature of Reform | Administrative / Procedural |
| Targeted Problem | Judicial delay for vulnerable groups |
| Justice Delivery | Priority listing & hearing |
| Related Concept | Substantive equality |
| Governance Dimension | Judicial reforms |
| Exam Relevance | GS-II (Polity, Judiciary) |

| Exam | Year | Question Theme | Key Answer |
|-------------------------------|------|--|-------------------------------|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2016 | Right to speedy justice flows from— | Article 21 |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II) | 2018 | Judicial reforms and access to justice | Priority hearings, legal aid |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2020 | Legal Services Authorities Act relates to— | Free legal aid |
| State PSC (RAS/PCS) | 2022 | Senior citizens' legal protection | Special procedures & priority |
| SSC CGL | 2021 | Acid attack survivors are protected under— | Criminal & welfare laws |
| Judicial Services | 2023 | Principle of substantive equality | Unequals treated differently |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II) | 2023 | Pendency of cases & vulnerable litigants | Fast-tracking, prioritisation |

• **With reference to the Supreme Court's decision to prioritise hearing of cases of disadvantaged sections, consider the following statements:**

- Persons with disabilities and acid attack survivors are included in the priority categories.
- Senior citizens above the age of 80 years are eligible for prioritised hearing.
- The categorisation applies only to cases pending in High Courts.

• **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

Goa Announces Its Third District – *Kushavati*

- Goa is set to get its third district, named *Kushavati*, marking a major administrative reorganisation.

गोवा को तीसरा जिला कुशावती मिलने जा रहा है, जो एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रशासनिक पुनर्गठन है।

- The announcement was made by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.

इसकी घोषणा मुख्यमंत्री प्रमोद सावंत ने की।

2. Name & Historical Link

- The new district is named after the ancient Kushavati river flowing through the region.

नए जिले का नाम क्षेत्र से होकर बहने वाली प्राचीन कुशावती नदी के नाम पर रखा गया है।

3. Existing Administrative Structure

- At present, Goa has only two districts: North Goa and South Goa.

वर्तमान में गोवा में केवल दो जिले हैं—उत्तरी गोवा और दक्षिण गोवा।

- Kushavati will become Goa's third district.

कुशावती गोवा का तीसरा जिला होगा।

4. Composition of Kushavati District

- The Kushavati district will be carved entirely out of South Goa.
कुशावती जिला पूरी तरह दक्षिण गोवा से बनाया जाएगा।
 - It will comprise four talukas: Dharbandora, Quepem, Sanguem, and Canacona.
इसमें चार तालुका होंगे—धारबंदोरा, क्यूपेम, सांगुएम और कनाकोना।
-

5. District Headquarters & Administration

- Quepem town has been designated as the headquarters of Kushavati district.
क्यूपेम नगर को कुशावती जिले का मुख्यालय बनाया गया है।
 - Until dedicated infrastructure is created, administrative work will continue from South Goa headquarters.
जब तक आवश्यक अवसंरचना विकसित नहीं हो जाती, प्रशासनिक कार्य दक्षिण गोवा मुख्यालय से ही संचालित होंगे।
 - The South Goa Collector will temporarily oversee the new district.
दक्षिण गोवा के कलेक्टर अस्थायी रूप से नए जिले का प्रभार संभालेंगे।
-

6. Governance Significance

- The move aims to improve administrative efficiency and regional governance.
इस कदम का उद्देश्य प्रशासनिक दक्षता और क्षेत्रीय शासन को बेहतर बनाना है।
 - Better connectivity and service delivery have been assured by the state government.
राज्य सरकार ने बेहतर कनेक्टिविटी और सेवा वितरण का आश्वासन दिया है।
-

| Aspect | Details |
|--|--|
| New District Name | Kushavati |
| State | Goa |
| Total Districts (After Reorganisation) | 3 |
| Existing Districts | North Goa, South Goa |
| Origin of New District | Carved out of South Goa |
| Talukas Included | Dharbandora, Quepem, Sanguem, Canacona |
| District Headquarters | Quepem |
| Administrative Head (Temporary) | South Goa Collector |
| Naming Basis | Ancient Kushavati river |
| Exam Relevance | Polity, Administration, Indian Geography |

| Exam | Year | Question Theme | Key Answer |
|-------------------------------|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2017 | Creation of districts falls under— | State Government |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-II) | 2018 | Administrative reorganisation & governance | District formation improves delivery |
| State PSC | 2022 | Talukas are administrative units under— | Districts |
| SSC CGL | 2021 | Who can create a new district? | State Government |
| Railway NTPC | 2020 | District headquarters are important for— | Administration |
| UPSC Prelims | 2023 | Rivers influencing place names | Historical-geographical linkage |

• **With reference to the newly announced Kushavati district in Goa, consider the following statements:**

- Kushavati will be Goa's third district.
- The district is carved entirely out of South Goa.
- Panaji has been designated as the headquarters of Kushavati district.

• **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

Bomb Cyclone

- A powerful winter storm rapidly intensified into a bomb cyclone over the United States, disrupting travel and power supply.

एक शक्तिशाली शीतकालीन तूफान अमेरिका में तीव्र गति से बम चक्रवात में बदल गया, जिससे यात्रा और बिजली आपूर्ति बाधित हुई।

2. What is a Bomb Cyclone?

- A bomb cyclone is a mid-latitude low-pressure system that intensifies extremely rapidly.
बम चक्रवात एक मध्य-अक्षांश निम्न-दाब तंत्र है जो अत्यंत तीव्र गति से सशक्त होता है।
 - It is defined by a fall in central air pressure of at least 24 millibars in 24 hours.
इसे 24 घंटों में केंद्रीय वायुदाब में कम-से-कम 24 मिलीबार की गिरावट से परिभाषित किया जाता है।
 - The process is scientifically called "Explosive Cyclogenesis".
इस प्रक्रिया को वैज्ञानिक रूप से "विस्फोटक चक्रवातजनन (Explosive Cyclogenesis)" कहा जाता है।
-

3. Key Characteristics

- Occurs mainly in mid-latitudes (30°–60°).
मुख्यतः 30°–60° मध्य अक्षांशों में बनता है।
- Associated with blizzards, heavy snowfall, intense rainfall, and hurricane-force winds.
बर्फ़ीले तूफान, भारी हिमपात/वर्षा और हरिकेन-समान तेज़ हवाओं से जुड़ा होता है।
- Often disrupts air, road, and rail transport.
अक्सर हवाई, सड़क और रेल परिवहन को गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित करता है।

4. Formation Conditions

- Sharp temperature contrast between cold polar air and warm tropical air.
ठंडी ध्रुवीय हवा और गर्म उष्णकटिबंधीय हवा के बीच तीव्र तापांतर।
 - Strong jet stream support in the upper atmosphere.
ऊपरी वायुमंडल में शक्तिशाली जेट स्ट्रीम की भूमिका।
 - Abundant moisture supply, often from warm ocean currents.
गर्म महासागरीय धाराओं से प्रचुर नमी की आपूर्ति।
-

5. Impacts

- Severe blizzards, storm surges (near coasts), and widespread power outages.
भीषण हिम-तूफान, तटीय क्षेत्रों में स्टॉर्म सर्ज और व्यापक बिजली कटौती।
 - Economic losses due to transport shutdowns and infrastructure damage.
परिवहन ठप होने और अवसंरचना क्षति से आर्थिक नुकसान।
-

6. Climate Change Link (Analytical Angle)

- Warming oceans can enhance moisture availability, increasing storm intensity.
गर्म होते महासागर नमी बढ़ाते हैं, जिससे तूफानों की तीव्रता बढ़ सकती है।
- However, bomb cyclones are natural mid-latitude systems, not tropical cyclones.
हालाँकि बम चक्रवात प्राकृतिक मध्य-अक्षांशीय तंत्र हैं, न कि उष्णकटिबंधीय चक्रवात।

| Aspect | Details |
|--------------------|---|
| Scientific Term | Explosive Cyclogenesis |
| Pressure Criterion | ≥ 24 mb drop in 24 hours |
| Latitudinal Belt | Mid-latitudes (30° – 60°) |
| Season | Mostly winter |
| Wind Speed | Can reach hurricane-force |
| Precipitation | Heavy snow / rain |
| Related Feature | Jet Stream |
| Ocean Role | Moisture from warm currents |
| Different from | Tropical Cyclones |
| Exam Area | Geography (Climatology) |

| Exam | Year | Question Theme | Key Answer |
|------------------------------|------|--|--------------------------|
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2016 | Jet streams influence weather systems | Support cyclogenesis |
| UPSC CSE Prelims | 2018 | Mid-latitude cyclones are caused by | Temperature contrast |
| UPSC CSE Mains (GS-I) | 2020 | Western Disturbances & mid-latitude cyclones | Extratropical systems |
| State PSC | 2022 | Explosive cyclogenesis refers to | Rapid pressure fall |
| SSC CGL | 2021 | Mid-latitude cyclones occur in which belt? | Temperate belt |
| Railway NTPC | 2020 | Blizzards are associated with | Cold regions & cyclones |
| UPSC Prelims | 2023 | Difference between tropical & temperate cyclones | Energy source & latitude |

-
- **With reference to a 'Bomb Cyclone', consider the following statements:**
 - It is also known as explosive cyclogenesis.
 - It involves a rapid fall in central air pressure of at least 24 millibars in 24 hours.
 - It primarily forms in tropical regions over warm oceans.
 - **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**
 - A. 1 and 2 only
 - B. 2 and 3 only
 - C. 1 only
 - D. 1, 2 and 3

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Word of the day

Fortuitous:

happening by chance rather than by intention

Synonyms: coincidental, fortunate, unexpected

Usage: *The timing was fortuitous for both sides.*

Pronunciation:

newsth.live/fortuitouspro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /fɔ:tju:ɪtəs/





Thank you 😊

