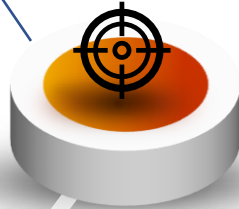


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Atomic energy pioneer
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IDENTITY CRISIS
The struggle of scheme-based workers
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PERFECT DAY
RR causes past CSK, finishes on a high
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INSIDE

Monsoon likely to reach Kerala later this week IMD
NEW DELHI
The southwest monsoon is likely to reach Kerala later this week, the India Meteorological Department said, predicting the earliest monsoon onset in over 15 years. » PAGE 4

Five killed in T.N. after rockslide at stone quarry
SIVANGANGA
Five workers were killed in a rockslide at a stone quarry in Malakottai in Tamil Nadu's Sivaganga district on Tuesday. The accident was caused by a crack that developed while drilling the rocks. » PAGE 2

Ashoka varsity academic sent to judicial custody
GURUGRAM
A court in Haryana on Tuesday remanded in judicial custody Ali Khan Mahmudabad, an associate professor with Ashoka University, rejecting the police's plea to extend his police custody. » PAGE 4

Dozens of trucks with aid entering Gaza, says Israel
DEIR AL-BALAH
Israel's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oren Marmorstein said dozens of aid trucks began entering Gaza on Tuesday. Organisations in Gaza did not confirm whether they received supplies. » PAGE 14

Pakistan govt. promotes Army chief General Munir to Field Marshal for 'defeating enemy'

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan government on Tuesday decided to promote Army chief General Asim Munir to the rank of Field Marshal for his role in the recent conflict with India, making him the second top military officer in the country's history to be elevated to the position. The decision to promote Gen. Munir was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, according to an official statement. Gen. Munir is the first Army General since General Ayub Khan to be elevated to the highest military rank in Pakistan. General Khan was conferred the rank of Field Marshal in 1958. "The Government of Pakistan has approved the



promotion of Gen Asim Munir (Nishan-e-Imtiaz Military) to the rank of Field Marshal for ensuring the security of the country and defeating the enemy based on the high strategy and courageous leadership," the Prime Minister's office said. Gen. Munir's promotion to the largely ceremonial

the military actions after India hit eight military installations in Pakistan on early May 10 in response to Pakistan's attempts to target Indian military bases. The PMO said in the statement that Gen. Munir led the Army "with exemplary courage and determination and coordinated the war strategy and efforts of the armed forces in a comprehensive manner". In recognition of his "outstanding" military leadership, the Cabinet approved the Prime Minister's proposal to promote Gen. Munir to the rank of Field Marshal, the statement said. The statement added that Prime Minister Shehbaz met President Asif Ali Zardari and took him into confidence regarding this decision. It also said the govern-

ment unanimously decided to continue the services of Air Chief Marshal Zahar Ahmed Babar Siddiqui after his term ends. "This is not a personal achievement, but a tribute to the armed forces and the people of Pakistan," Gen. Munir said in a statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). He extended thanks to the Pakistan's President, Prime Minister, and the federal cabinet for their trust in him, emphasising that the honour is a national trust that demands the highest sacrifice. Gen. Munir, who headed both powerful agencies - the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Military Intelligence (MI) - assumed charge as the Army chief in November 2022.

Battered Bengaluru



Traffic nightmare: Commuters waded through a waterlogged road after heavy rain in Bengaluru on Tuesday. »

Diplomatic outreach visits begin today

Three multi-party delegations will start their journey today and tomorrow, says Ministry

They will highlight cross-border terror from Pakistan while presenting India's doctrine of zero tolerance

The teams will visit countries such as Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, DRC, and the UAE

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

The first three multi-party delegations to international capitals to brief global community about Operation Sindoor will start their journey on Wednesday and Thursday, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Tuesday. The delegations, over the next fortnight, will highlight that cross-border terrorism from Pakistan continues to be a major disruptor for India while presenting the Indian doctrine of zero tolerance of terror, according to veteran diplomat Syed Akbaruddin, who is part of the diplomatic outreach effort. "In various countries the

world, the salience of terrorism over the past two decades has gone down as they are prioritising other issues. For example, for some countries, T stands for tariff but for us in India, T also stands for terrorism because over several decades now, cross-border terrorism from Pakistan has been a challenge to our social harmony and developmental goals," said Mr. Akbaruddin, who will visit Egypt, Qatar, Ethiopia, and South Africa between May 24 and June 1, along with eight MPs in a delegation led by Supriya Sule of the NCP (SC).

The first three teams that will leave during Wednesday and Thursday were briefed by Foreign Secretary Vikram Mishra on Tuesday. The multi-party delegations are expected to meet government functionaries, including ministers, think-tanks and media during their visits to foreign capitals.

A united front

The group led by Janta Dal (United) leader Sanjay Jha will visit UAE, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore.

The team headed by Shrikant Shinde of Shiv Sena will visit UAE, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sierra Leone.

The delegation led by DRK leader Kanemoshi is set to visit UAE, Liberia, Russia, Spain, Greece, Slovenia, and Latvia.

BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi said that apart from the members of the UN Security Council, five other countries have been selected that will become members of the UNSC in the coming days. "These are going to be 25 nations... this is our message that India stands united

against terrorism," said Ms. Sarangi.

"We will be interacting with a cross-section of people there like the principal state actors, members of Parliament, academicians. These would be general meetings

the party leaders on Tuesday. The Trinamool has named Abhishek Banerjee in place of Yusuf Pathan, while the Sena has endorsed Priyanka Chaturvedi.

The Trinamool Congress and the Shiv Sena (UBT) have changed their stance on nomination of MPs to the diplomatic teams after Union Minister Kiren Rijju reached out to

proceed to visit the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, ending with Malaysia.

Speaking to the media, Mr. Jha said the focus of their campaign would be on the involvement of the Pakistan state and military in the terror attacks against India. "Pakistan State and Pakistan Army are both involved in this. This was done like a proxy war against India," said Mr. Jha. The government had constituted seven groups consisting of 51 MPs from various political parties to project a united national front before the world community while briefing day about Operation Sindoor that targeted nine terror hubs in Pakistan in response to Pionigam attack.

Trinamool, Sena (UBT) relent

Full Report on Page 8

against terrorism," said Ms. Sarangi. "We will be interacting with a cross-section of people there like the principal state actors, members of Parliament, academicians. These would be general meetings

New Waqf law 'creeping acquisition' of property, petitioners argue in SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Countering the Supreme Court's observation that a parliamentary statute like the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 enjoys a presumption of constitutionality, petitioners on Tuesday termed the new law a "creeping acquisition" of Waqf properties owned by the Muslim community, the largest religious minority group in India. A Bench of Chief Justice of India B.R. Gawai and Justice Augustine George Masih heard petitioners for a full day on their plea for an interim order to stay the implementation of the 2025 Act, which came into force on April 8. "Today, you [petitioners] are only arguing for interim relief. You have to make a strong case for interim relief. The presumption in favour of a parliamentary law is that of constitutionality," Chief Justice Gawai said, addressing senior advocate Kapil Sibal, the lead counsel for the petitioners. Mr. Sibal said a presumption of constitutionality could be rebutted if a prima facie breach was shown. The court could intervene and stay the law in public interest if its execution caused irreparable harm. He extended thanks to the Pakistan's President, Prime Minister, and the federal cabinet for their trust in him, emphasising that the honour is a national trust that demands the highest sacrifice. Gen. Munir, who headed both powerful agencies - the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Military Intelligence (MI) - assumed charge as the Army chief in November 2022.



B.R. GAWAI
Chief Justice of India

how Section 3C of the 2025 Act gave free rein to any encroacher to start a dispute. The inquiry into the dispute would be conducted by a designated officer, who is a government servant or an agent of the government. There is no timeline or procedure prescribed for the inquiry in the Act. A dispute over even a fragment of the land would freeze the Waqf status of the entire property, Mr. Sibal noted.

"This means existing uses of the property, whether it be for schools, hospitals, burial, community centres etc., would have to immediately cease. There is also no restriction on demolition or on the government creating irreversible third-party rights in such properties during the inquiry period. The government can unilaterally deem a property as non-Waqf," Mr. Sibal submitted. He referred to the "substantive Waqf Property Act" as acquired by the government through a legislative diktat, that too without payment of compensation, which is an onerous charge as the Hindu or Sikh, allowed rights for people of other faiths to run their temples or gurdwaras. Mr. Sibal pointed out that a Waqf property, once declared a protected mon-



KAPIL SIBAL
Advocate for petitioners

ument or area under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904 or the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, would become void as a Waqf under Section 3D of the 2025 Act. Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi argued that this "super-imposing" of ancient monument laws on religious Waqfs would have a ripple effect on the protection given to them under the Places of Worship Act, 1991.

Unregistered Waqfs He submitted that half of the country's eight lakh Waqfs are unregistered Waqfs-by-user, which have been effectively invalidated by the 2025 Act as they have been barred from approaching court. Many of these age-old Waqfs have no documents or deeds to support their identity, though they have been used for charitable and religious purposes for centuries, he said. Mr. Singhvi alleged that the government's claim of a "holistic explosion" in Waqf properties from 2013 to 2024 was intended to pre-judge the court. The Centre is expected to begin its counter-arguments today.

Pakistan govt. promotes Army chief General Munir to Field Marshal for 'defeating enemy'

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan government on Tuesday decided to promote Army chief General Asim Munir to the rank of Field Marshal for his role in the recent conflict with India, making him the second top military officer in the country's history to be elevated to the position.

The decision to promote Gen. Munir was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, according to an official statement.

Gen. Munir is the first Army General since General Ayub Khan to be elevated to the highest military rank in Pakistan.

General Khan was conferred the rank of Field Marshal in 1959.

"The Government of Pakistan has approved the



Highest rank: Asim Munir coordinated the war strategy and efforts of the armed forces in a comprehensive manner, says the PMO. AFP

promotion of Gen Asim Munir (Nishan-e-Imtiaz Military) to the rank of Field Marshal for ensuring the security of the country and defeating the enemy based on the high strategy and courageous leadership," the Prime Minister's office said.

Gen. Munir's promotion to the largely ceremonial

rank came over a week-and-a-half after the Indian and Pakistani militaries reached an understanding on cessation of military actions after four days of intense hostilities.

Clashes with India

The Indian military has been maintaining that Pakistan pleaded for stopping

the military actions after India hit eight military installations in Pakistan on early May 10 in response to Pakistan's attempts to target Indian military bases.

The PMO said in the statement that Gen. Munir led the Army "with exemplary courage and determination and coordinated the war strategy and efforts of the armed forces in a comprehensive manner".

In recognition of his "outstanding" military leadership, the Cabinet approved the Prime Minister's proposal to promote Gen. Munir to the rank of Field Marshal, the statement said.

The statement added that Prime Minister Shehbaz met President Asif Ali Zardari and took him into confidence regarding this decision.

It also said the govern-

ment unanimously decided to continue the services of Air Chief Marshal Zahar Ahmed Babar Sidhu after his term ends.

"This is not a personal achievement, but a tribute to the armed forces and the people of Pakistan," Gen. Munir said in a statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

He extended thanks to the Pakistan's President, Prime Minister, and the federal cabinet for their trust in him, emphasising that the honour is a national trust that demands the highest sacrifice.

General Munir, who headed both powerful spy agencies - the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Military Intelligence (MI) - assumed charge as the Army chief in November 2022.

- Pakistan has promoted **Army Chief General Asim Munir** to the **rank of Field Marshal**, the **second officer in Pakistan's history** after General Ayub Khan (1959) to receive this honor.
 - The decision came in recognition of his leadership during the **recent India-Pakistan military standoff**, particularly around May 10, when Indian forces retaliated against Pakistani attempts to target military bases.
-



Significance of the Promotion:

- **Title:** Field Marshal
- **Award:** Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Military)
- **Citation:** For "ensuring the security of the country and defeating the enemy based on high strategy and courageous leadership."

Strategic & Operational Details:

- General Munir coordinated “**war strategy and military efforts**” with **exemplary courage**, per Pakistan’s PMO.
 - The elevation came shortly after both nations agreed to **cease hostilities**, which lasted for **four days**.
 - Gen. Munir had led intelligence agencies:
 - **ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence)**
 - **MI (Military Intelligence)**
-

Clashes with India – May 2025 Episode:

- The promotion is closely linked to Pakistan’s response following **India’s May 10 strikes on 8 Pakistani military installations**.
- These were **retaliatory airstrikes** by India after Pakistani drones/missiles attempted to strike Indian bases.
- Pakistan has since sought de-escalation.

- **General Ayub Khan**, the first Field Marshal of Pakistan, later became its President (1958–1969).
- Rank of Field Marshal is rarely used and symbolically represents **supreme military honor**.

New Waqf law 'creeping acquisition' of property, petitioners argue in SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Countering the Supreme Court's observation that a parliamentary statute like the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 enjoys a presumption of constitutionality, petitioners on Tuesday termed the new law a "creeping acquisition" of Waqf properties owned by the Muslim community, the largest religious minority group in India.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih heard petitioners for a full day on their plea for an interim order to stay the implementation of the 2025 Act, which came into force on April 8. "Today, you [petitioners] are only arguing for interim relief. You have to make a strong case for interim relief. The presumption in favour of a parliamentary law is that of constitutionality," Chief Justice Gavai said, addressing senior advocate Kapil Sibal, the lead counsel for the petitioners.

Mr. Sibal said a presumption of constitutionality could be rebutted if a *prima facie* breach was shown. The court could intervene and stay the law in public interest if its execution caused irreparable injury, he said.

'Ruse for acquisition'

"The 2025 amendments are a ruse to capture Waqfs. Property can be acquired by the government through a legislative diktat, that too without payment of compensation, which is usual in cases of acquisition. These amendments directly encroach on a minority community's rights under Article 25 [freedom of religion]," Mr. Sibal submitted.

The senior lawyer noted

You have to make a strong case for interim relief. The presumption in favour of a parliamentary law is that of constitutionality

B.R. GAVAI
Chief Justice of India



The 2025 amendments... directly encroach on a minority community's rights under Article 25 [freedom of religion]

KAPIL SIBAL
Advocate for petitioners



how Section 3C of the 2025 Act gave free rein to any encroacher to start a dispute.

The inquiry into the dispute would be conducted by a designated officer, who is a government servant or an "agent of the government".

There is no timeline or procedure prescribed for the inquiry in the Act. A dispute over even a fragment of the land would freeze the Waqf status of the entire property, Mr. Sibal noted.

"This means existing uses of the property, whether it be for schools, hospitals, burial, community centres etc., would have to immediately cease. There is also no restriction on demolition or on the government creating irreversible third-party rights in such properties during the inquiry period. The government can unilaterally deem a property as non-Waqf," Mr. Sibal submitted.

He referred to the "subordination" of Muslim members in Waqf administrative bodies by including non-Muslims in them. He pointed out that no other religious endowments, Hindu or Sikh, allowed room for people of other faiths to run their temples or gurdwaras.

Mr. Sibal pointed out that a Waqf property, once declared a protected mon-

ument or area under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904 or the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, would become void as a Waqf under Section 3D of the 2025 Act.

Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi argued that this "super-imposing" of ancient monument laws on religious Waqfs would have a ripple effect on the protection given to them under the Places of Worship Act, 1991.

Unregistered Waqfs

He submitted that half of the country's eight lakh Waqfs are unregistered Waqfs-by-user, which have been effectively invalidated by the 2025 Act as they have been barred from approaching court. Many of these age-old Waqfs have no documents or deeds to support their identity, though they have been used for charitable and religious purposes for centuries, he said.

Mr. Singhvi alleged that the government's claim of a 116% "explosion" in Waqf properties from 2013 to 2024 was intended to prejudice the court.

The Centre is expected to begin its counter-arguments today.

KERALA MOVES SC

» PAGE 4

What is the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025?

- Amends existing Waqf laws regulating properties held by the Muslim community for religious/charitable purposes.
- Came into **force on April 8, 2025**.
- Currently under constitutional challenge in the **Supreme Court of India**.

Key Arguments by Petitioners:

"Creeping acquisition" of property:

- **Kapil Sibal** (counsel for petitioners): The amendments allow the government to **acquire properties without due process**.
- Alleged **violation of Article 25** (freedom of religion).

Presumption of constitutionality:

- **Chief Justice B.R. Gavai**: Any **parliamentary law is presumed constitutional** unless strong proof is presented.

Section 3C – Land Disputes:

- Grants broad power to any **"encroacher"** to raise disputes.
- **No timeline or process** prescribed for resolving such disputes.
- Property under dispute becomes **frozen as Waqf** pending inquiry.



Section 3D – Protected Monuments:

- If Waqf overlaps with protected areas under **Ancient Monuments Preservation Act (1904)** or **Ancient Sites & Remains Act (1958)**, it becomes **void**.



Impact on existing religious infrastructure:

- Schools, hospitals, cemeteries, burial grounds, etc., must **immediately cease operation** if under dispute.
- No safeguards to prevent demolition or **third-party interests**.



Unregistered Waqfs:

- Almost half of India's **8 lakh Waqf properties** are **unregistered**.
- These are now **barred from legal protection** due to lack of documentation.



Religious bias:

- Petitioners argue that **Muslim Waqf boards** are **subordinated** by inclusion of **non-Muslim members**.
- No similar administrative control is imposed on **Hindu or Sikh religious trusts**.

Types of Waqf:

Type	Purpose/Use
Waqf al-Ahli (Private)	For the benefit of family/descendants (less common today)
Waqf al-Khairi (Public)	For the general public good – e.g., mosques, schools, hospitals
Waqf al-Mashrout	Conditional waqf – property given with specific conditions

Common Uses of Waqf Property:

- Building **mosques**, **madrasas**, and **graveyards**
- Running **orphanages** or **hospitals**
- Renting land and using the income for **community welfare**
- Supporting the poor and needy

Legal Status in India:

- Governed by the **Waqf Act, 1995** and its amendments
 - Managed by **State Waqf Boards**
 - India has the **largest Waqf properties in the world** after Saudi Arabia (over 6 lakh properties)
-

Key Features:

- Once a property is declared as **Waqf**, the ownership is transferred to **God**.
- It **cannot be sold, gifted, or inherited**.
- A person who manages the Waqf is called a **Mutawalli**.



Comparison: Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2013 vs 2025

Feature / Provision	Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2013	Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 (UMEED Act) 
Objective	Strengthen governance of Waqf properties	Overhaul governance with digitization, efficiency, and inclusion
Title of Amendment	Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2013	Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency, and Development (UMEED) Act
Appointment of Members	At least two women members in every State Waqf Board	Allows non-Muslims to be members of Waqf Boards
Leasing of Waqf Property	Lease extended up to 30 years for commercial purposes	Continues lease norms but through digital approval mechanisms
Waqf by User Concept	Still valid	Removed – No Waqf can be created merely by long-term use

Property Registration System	Manual registration at state level	Mandatory central digital registration on national portal
Dispute Resolution	Waqf Tribunal decisions were largely final	Appeals allowed in High Courts against Tribunal decisions
Appointment of Experts in Tribunals	Inclusion of Muslim law expert mandatory	Continues, with provision for multi-disciplinary experts
Authority in Property Investigation	State-appointed Waqf Survey Commissioner	Higher-level authority than District Collector can conduct investigation
Transparency Measures	Not fully defined	Focus on IT-based governance , GPS mapping of Waqf land, online audit
Community Feedback & Criticism	Appreciated for women inclusion, criticized for unclear land management	Criticized for dilution of Muslim-only representation and removing traditional "Waqf by use" concept

Kerala moves top court against Waqf Act amendments

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Kerala has moved the Supreme Court to protect the fundamental right of "quite a large percentage of Muslims" in the State to manage their own religious affairs while challenging the provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act of 2023.

The State said the Muslim population of Kerala was wary of the consequences of the 2025 Act on their Waqfs and Waqf properties.

"They have got genuine apprehension about the implementation of the present amendment Act would deny them their fundamental rights under the Constitution including Article 25; and that the implementation of the amendment would alter the nature and status of Waqf and Waqf properties and make the status of the apprehension of the Muslim minority in Kerala that they are discriminated against in the matter of right to manage religious affairs, the waqf and waqf properties is genuine," the committee did not visit the State...

The State said it found many of the provisions of the amendment Act "highly unjust and against national validity doubtful".

Kerala said it wanted to intervene in the Waqf challenge and sought its day in court against the 2025 Act. "The State is very much interested in the outcome of the case. The State has



A protest rally against the Waqf Act in Kozhikode. K. RAJESH

got valid legal and constitutional submissions to be made before this court," the application said. Kerala argued that once a property becomes Waqf, it would always be a Waqf, and the amendments would alter the nature of the property. The State feels that the apprehension of the Muslim minority in Kerala that they are discriminated against in the matter of right to manage religious affairs, the waqf and waqf properties is genuine.

The State said it found many of the provisions of the amendment Act "highly unjust and against national validity doubtful". Kerala said it wanted to intervene in the Waqf challenge and sought its day in court against the 2025 Act.

The State is very much interested in the outcome of the case. The State has

Court sends Ashoka University academic to judicial custody

It rejects plea for extension of police custody; the associate professor was arrested for post on Operation Sindoor; court to take up case on May 27

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

A court in Haryana's Sonapat on Tuesday remanded in judicial custody Ali Khan Mahmudabad, an associate professor with Ashoka University, rejecting the police's plea to extend his police custody by seven days. The court has fixed May 27 as the next date of hearing.

Mr. Mahmudabad was produced in the court of the Magistrate, First Class Azad Singh on the completion of his two-day police remand in a case pertaining to comments made by him on social media on Operation Sindoor.

The police had sought the extension of his custody on the grounds that his passport had to be recovered from him. In certain details of his visits to his home in Sonapat, a record of his communication via social media had to be obtained.

Arguing on behalf of Mr. Mahmudabad, Kapil Balyan and Mohammad Chand Hussain submitted that the details of Mr. Mahmudabad's passport had already been provided to the police and his original passport would be submitted to the investigating of-



The Nagrik Adhikar Manch holding a protest against the arrest of Ali Khan Mahmudabad in Sonapat on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SC to hear Mahmudabad's petition today

A Supreme Court bench of Justices Surya Kant and N. K. Jaisankar is scheduled to hear a criminal writ petition on Wednesday filed by Ali Khan Mahmudabad. An application for his interim bail is tagged with the petition.

He claimed that while the investigation in the Adani Group's dealings had been "inexplicably" delayed for over two years, despite a Supreme Court directive requiring it to be

completed within two months. According to the Congress, the Elara India Opportunities Fund had nearly 99% of its assets invested in three Adani companies as of December 2022, while the Vespera Fund had almost 94% of its portfolio in Adani Enterprises as of June 2022.

Mr. Ramesh also alleged that the two funds had offered to settle the matter via arbitration, a nominal fine without admitting wrongdoing. "Try as the government may to cover up India's biggest scam, the truth is coming out. And if not via India's compromised institutions, they will come out through foreign jurisdictions that Modi cannot bribe, bully, or co-opt," Mr. Ramesh said.

Ever since the U.S.-based short selling firm Hindenburg Research made serious allegations against the Adani Group headed by industrialist Gautam Adani, the Congress has been persistent in its attack against the group and Mr. Modi.

Heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely over the western coast, in Karnataka, the Konkan region, Goa, and Kerala and the adjoining areas between May 20 and 26, the IMD's bulletin said on Tuesday.

Early arrival On May 10, the IMD used its forecast model to predict that the monsoon was likely to reach Kerala on May 27, beginning its four-month sojourn in mainland India.

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'Despite govt. efforts to cover up, truth on Adani is coming out'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Intensifying its attack on the Narendra Modi government and the Adani Group, the Congress on Tuesday cited media reports that claimed the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) had issued warnings to two Mauritius-based offshore funds holding Adani Group shares.

The Congress claimed that despite the SEBI's actions, the ongoing investigation into the conglomerate was dragging on, allowing the Adani Group to benefit from the delay.

According to news reports, SEBI has threatened the Mauritius-based Elara India Opportunities Fund and Vespera Fund with penalties and possible cancellation of licences for failing to disclose their shareholding details.

SEBI has reportedly threatened these funds, which have been accused of acting as fronts for benami investments in violation of regulatory norms. "Congress via videoconferencing chief Jairam Ramesh said in a post on social media platform X.

He claimed that while the investigation in the Adani Group's dealings had been "inexplicably" delayed for over two years, despite a Supreme Court directive requiring it to be

completed within two months. According to the Congress, the Elara India Opportunities Fund had nearly 99% of its assets invested in three Adani companies as of December 2022, while the Vespera Fund had almost 94% of its portfolio in Adani Enterprises as of June 2022.

Mr. Ramesh also alleged that the two funds had offered to settle the matter via arbitration, a nominal fine without admitting wrongdoing. "Try as the government may to cover up India's biggest scam, the truth is coming out. And if not via India's compromised institutions, they will come out through foreign jurisdictions that Modi cannot bribe, bully, or co-opt," Mr. Ramesh said.

Ever since the U.S.-based short selling firm Hindenburg Research made serious allegations against the Adani Group headed by industrialist Gautam Adani, the Congress has been persistent in its attack against the group and Mr. Modi.

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Manipur probe panel gets another extension

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The three-member Commission of Inquiry (CoI) notified by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2023 to probe the Manipur ethnic violence has received a third extension. It must submit its report to the Union government by November 20.

The CoI has received around 11,000 affidavits, with January 24 as the last date, but will accept fresh affidavits if presented.

The ethnic violence between the tribal Kuki-Zo-Hmar people and the Meitei people that erupted in the State on May 3, 2023 has claimed around 250 lives and displaced more than 60,000 people.

HC seeks MP's view in defamation case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought the response of Congress leader Anshu Tharoor on a defamation plea filed against him by Bharatiya Janata Party leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar.

The court issued the direction on a revision petition filed by Mr. Chandrasekhar challenging the court's order that dismissed the criminal defamation complaint against Mr. Tharoor.

An issue notice to the respondent. Let the trial court record in digital form with bookmarking be requisitioned," the court said, adding that the "required consideration". Mr. Chandrasekhar filed

Justice Somashekar appointed Manipur HC Chief Justice

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday appointed Justice Kempiah Somashekar of the Karnataka High Court as the Chief Justice of Manipur High Court.

Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal announced the appointment on X.

"In exercise of the power conferred by the Constitution of India, the President of India, in consultation with Chief Justice of India, is pleased to appoint Justice Kempiah Somashekar, Judge of the Karnataka High Court, as Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court," he said.

The appointment fol-

lows a recommendation by a three-member collegium headed by CJI B.R. Gavi, ahead of the retirement of incumbent Chief Justice D. Krishnakumar on May 21.

Justice Somashekar began his legal practice in 1990. He was appointed District and Sessions Judge in 1998, Additional Judge in 2006, and Permanent Judge in 2018.

The complaint last September. He alleged that Mr. Tharoor defamed him by making false statements during an interview to news channel, wherein he accused the BJP leader of bribing voters in Thiruvananthapuram constituency during the Lok Sabha election in 2024.

The BJP leader contended that Mr. Tharoor made the allegations "with the intent to lower his reputation and to impact the result of the election." He contended that the trial court overlooked evidence while ruling that no case of defamation was established.

The High Court scheduled to hear the case again on September 16.

Journalists allege harassment as Shirui Lily Festival begins in Manipur after two-year gap

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

A five-day festival named after an endemic seasonal flower has begun on a thorny note in conflict-scarred Manipur when media persons en route to the festival turned back after allegedly being asked by security forces to conceal the words "Manipur State Transport" displayed on the government bus in which they were travelling.

Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhatia on Tuesday inaugurated the Shirui Lily Festival, held in the Nagaland-dominated Ukhrul district after a two-year gap due to the ethnic clashes between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei people.

The festival, which was to have been a barometer

of enforced peace in Manipur, was in the news after the State police registered a case against a Kuki student leader for allegedly asking the Meiteis to not cross the "buffer zone" to

attend the festival. The Imphal Valley-based Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) condemned the Gwalal incident and said the act of the security

personnel appeared to be a deliberate attempt to delegitimise the authority and very existence of Manipur within its territory.

"Such actions are not only irresponsible but

dangerously align with the agendas of illegal elements who have been persistently working to destabilise the region over the past two years," the COCOMI said in a statement.

The All Manipur Working Journalists' Union and the Editors' Guild Manipur take out a rally against the alleged harassment by security forces, in Imphal on Tuesday.

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Monsoon may reach Kerala later this week in early onset: IMD forecast

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The southwest monsoon is likely to reach Kerala later this week, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Tuesday, predicting the earliest monsoon onset in over 15 years.

"The conditions are likely to become favourable for monsoon onset over Kerala during next four to five days. The conditions are also likely to become favourable for further advance of southwest monsoon over some more parts of South Arabian Sea, remaining parts of Maldives and Comorin area; some parts of Lakshadweep area, Kerala, Tamil Nadu; some more parts South & Central Bay of Bengal, Northeast Bay of Bengal and some parts of northeastern States during the same period," the department said.

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Mr. Ramesh also alleged that the two funds had offered to settle the matter via arbitration, a nominal fine without admitting wrongdoing. "Try as the government may to cover up India's biggest scam, the truth is coming out. And if not via India's compromised

IB chief gets one-year extension in service

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on Tuesday extended the services of Tapan Kumar Deka, a 1988-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, as Director of the Intelligence Bureau for another year. Mr. Deka, 62, an officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre, was appointed IB chief in 2022. This is the second time his tenure has been extended by a year.

The officer will now remain in office at least until June 30, 2026.

The extension comes in the wake of the evolving security situation following Operation Sindoor. It was based on precise information provided by the IB that the terror camps and in-



Tapan Kumar Deka

frastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) were destroyed on May 7.

“The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved Mr. Deka’s extension as the Director, Intelligence Bureau, for a period of one year beyond June 30, 2025,” an order by the Personnel Ministry said.

Who Appoints

Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)

Eligibility

Senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, usually from 1984–1990 batches

Cadre

IPS (Mostly from AGMUT, Maharashtra, UP, etc.)

Rank

Equivalent to Secretary to the Government of India

Tenure

Generally **fixed for 2 years** (can be extended)

First IB Chief

T.G. Sanjeevi Pillai (1947–1950)

Current IB Chief

(As of 2025 – to be updated if needed) Tapan Deka (Appointed in 2022)

Removal Process	Serves at the pleasure of the President ; can be removed by Central Govt (via ACC)
Reports To	Union Home Secretary
Role & Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Internal intelligence- Counterterrorism- Surveillance- Intelligence analysis- Advising government on security threats
Headquarters	Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi
Related Bodies	RAW (external intelligence), NIA (anti-terror), NTRO

Krishna's promise offers hope to all, regardless of their past. He instructs Arjuna to declare boldly that a devotee of the Lord never perishes. This message is not just a rare promise, but a universal one, that anyone who surrenders to the divine love and redemption, Devotion has the power to transform lives. It can turn the darkest of pasts into a radiant future. Through sincere devotion, one can attain spiritual growth, inner peace, and ultimately, union with the divine.


Krishna's promise is a testament to the transformative power of devotion. It reminds us that no one is beyond saving and that with faith and determination, anyone can attain lasting peace and divinity. Let us embrace this message and strive to seek the path of devotion and spiritual growth.



India poised to emerge as world's top potato producer'

India is on track to becoming the world's top potato producer, overtaking China, according to scientists from the Peru-based International Potato Center (Centro Internacional de la Papa - CIP). Speaking at a symposium on "Root and Tuber Crops Research and Development in India and South Asia", experts projected that India's annual potato production could rise to 100 million tonnes by 2050. Addressing the seminar, the chairperson of the CIP Board, Helen Hambly Odame, said the institution's 50-year partnership with India has been instrumental in it becoming the second largest potato producer globally.

India's Top Global Production Rankings

Item	Category	Global Rank	Remarks	
Milk	Dairy	1st	Leading producer with over 239 million metric tons in 2023.	
Pulses (Chickpeas, Lentils, etc.)	Legumes	1st	Dominates global production of various pulses.	
Jute	Fiber Crop	1st	Major producer, especially in West Bengal.	
Ginger	Spice	1st	Significant contributor to global ginger supply.	
Bananas	Fruit	1st	Produces over 30 million tons annually.	
Mangoes	Fruit	1st	Accounts for a substantial share of global mango production.	
Lemons and Limes	Fruit	1st	Leading producer with significant exports.	

Papayas	Fruit	1st	Major contributor to global papaya supply.
Okra (Ladyfinger)	Vegetable	1st	Dominates global okra production.
Castor Oil Seeds	Oilseed	1st	Largest producer, vital for industrial applications.
Millets	Cereal	1st	Significant producer, especially in arid regions.
Spices (Overall)	Spice	1st	Includes chili, turmeric, cardamom, and more.
Buffalo Population	Livestock	1st	Houses the largest buffalo population globally.
Goat Population	Livestock	1st	Leading in goat numbers worldwide.
Coir	Natural Fiber	1st	Major producer, especially in Kerala.
Chickpeas	Legume	1st	Significant share in global chickpea production.

Goat Milk	Dairy	1st	Leading in goat milk production.
Indigenous Buffalo Meat	Meat	1st	Major producer and exporter.
Tropical Fruits	Fruit	1st	Includes mangoes, papayas, and more.
Sorghum	Cereal	1st	Significant in arid and semi-arid regions.
Cattle Population	Livestock	1st	Houses the largest cattle population globally.
Chicken Population	Poultry	1st	Leading in chicken numbers worldwide.

Jayant Narlikar, Indian astrophysicist who challenged Big Bang theory, passes away

He first gained international recognition when, alongside the British astronomer Fred Hoyle, he proposed the 'steady state' model of the universe; a prolific writer, Narlikar explored themes ranging from alien encounters to the moral quandaries arising from the rapid technological progress

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Jayant Narlikar, one of India's most distinguished astrophysicists who combined profound theoretical insight into cosmology with a lifelong commitment to science communication, passed away at his residence in Pune on Tuesday. He was 86.

Describing what made Dr. Narlikar one of the "greats", Tarun Souradeep, Director of the Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bengaluru, told *The Hindu* that it was his "sense of justice and equality" and his "unwavering commitment" to popularising science and combating "non-science-based superstition and astrology" that set him apart.

As a gifted institution-builder, Dr. Narlikar played a pioneering role in establishing the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, where he served as Founder-Director. Under

his stewardship, IUCAA emerged as a globally recognised centre for theoretical physics, cosmology, and astrophysics.

"He spawned a number of leading scientists who set new directions and schools: Thanu Padmanabhan (cosmology, gravitation, and quantum gravity); Sanjeev Dhurandhar (gravitational waves); Ajit Kembhavi (data-driven observational astronomy), to name a few," Dr. Souradeep, who completed his doctoral research under Dr. Narlikar's guidance, said.

'Science populariser'

A prolific writer and science populariser, Dr. Narlikar once recalled, in a blog post, "playing table tennis with Stephen Hawking (prior to his muscular atrophy)" when they were both students at the University of Cambridge.

Dr. Narlikar first gained international recognition when, alongside the British astronomer Fred Hoyle, he proposed the "steady



JAYANT NARLIKAR (1938-2025)

state" model of the universe – a theory positing a timeless cosmos in which matter is continuously created.

This stood in contrast to the dominant Big Bang model, a term ironically coined by Sir Fred to disparage it, which posits that the universe began at a single point in time.

Vocal critic

Although subsequent observational evidence has since firmly supported the

Big Bang theory, Dr. Narlikar remained a persistent and vocal critic of it, adapting and refining the steady state view throughout his career.

"He wore his remarkable learning in various disciplines very lightly and he combined to an unusual degree formidable scholarship with humility. He was well and truly a most luminous star of Indian science, who reflected the noblest of our civilisational traditions," Congress communi-

cations in-charge and Rajya Sabha member Jairam Ramesh tweeted. He shared an excerpt from the 1964 edition of *Yojana* – a Planning Commission publication – which debated whether India should lure the young Narlikar back from Cambridge.

Literary contributions

Dr. Narlikar was also widely admired for his literary contributions. His science-fiction story *Dhoomaketu* (*The Comet*) was adapted into a film, while his auto-

biography *Chaar Nagaran-tale Maze Vishwa* (*My Tale of Four Cities*) was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Prize. His writing – marked by clarity, an avoidance of jargon, and philosophical depth – explored themes ranging from alien encounters to the moral quandaries arising from the rapid technological progress.

His key influences

He was frequently featured in science programmes on television in the 1990s and credited Carl Sagan's outreach work, as well as the fiction of Sir Fred, Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, and Ray Bradbury, as key influences in his approach to communicating science.

Born to eminent parents – Vishnu Vasudev Narlikar, a mathematician at Banaras Hindu University (now IIT-BHU), and Sumati Narlikar, a Sanskrit scholar – Dr. Narlikar received his early education in Varanasi before moving to the University of Cambridge, where he completed his Ph.D. under Sir Fred's mentorship.

Who was Jayant Narlikar?

- One of India's most **distinguished theoretical astrophysicists**.
 - Known for his **lifelong commitment to science communication** and debunking superstition.
 - Passed away at age 86 in Pune (2025).
-

Major Scientific Contributions:

- Best known for co-developing the "**Steady State Theory**" of the universe along with British astronomer **Fred Hoyle**.
 - Contrasts with the **Big Bang theory**.
 - Posits that the universe has no beginning or end and is in a continuous state of creation.
- Vocal **critic of Big Bang model**, yet open to evidence-based refinements.

- **Founder-Director** of:
 - **IUCAA** – Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pune.
 - Helped India become a globally recognized center for research in:
 - Theoretical physics
 - Cosmology
 - Astrophysics
-

Science Popularization:

- A **prolific writer and communicator**, known for:
 - Clear, jargon-free style.
 - Tackling themes like **alien encounters, science ethics, and Indian civilisation**.
- Authored both **popular science books** and **science fiction**.
- His autobiography: "**Chaar Nagarantale Maze Vishwa**" (My Tale of Four Cities) won **Sahitya Akademi Award**.

🎓 Early Life & Education:

- Born to **Vishnu Vasudev Narlikar**, a mathematician.
 - Studied at **Banaras Hindu University (BHU)** and **University of Cambridge**.
 - Awarded **Padma Bhushan (1965)** and **Padma Vibhushan (2004)**.
-

📺 Legacy & Impact:

- Influenced by:
 - **Stephen Hawking**, Carl Sagan, Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke.
- Featured in Indian science TV shows in the 1990s.
- Instrumental in promoting **scientific temper**, especially post-1996 under the **UNESCO Kalinga Prize**.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, round object covered in colorful beads. The beads are arranged to form a map of India, with the landmass in shades of orange, yellow, and red, and the surrounding oceans in blue and green. The person holding the object is wearing a garment with a vibrant, geometric pattern in yellow, red, and black. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting with foliage.

India's Commitment to UN Peacekeeping

At the **United Nations Peacekeeping (UNPK)** Ministerial 2025 meeting in **Berlin**, 74 member states pledged to enhance the **effectiveness** and **adaptability** of peace operations amid evolving global challenges.

- **India** pledged a **Quick Reaction Force (QRF)**, **One male armed police (Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) or mixed armed police (CRPF)**, **Women-led Police Unit**, among others.
- As per **UNPK data**, **India** is currently the **4th largest** troop-contributing nation with **5,375 personnel** after **Nepal, Rwanda** and **Bangladesh**.
 - Nearly **180 Indian peacekeepers** have died in action—the **highest of any troop contributor**. India deployed the **first all-female unit to Liberia** in **2007**.

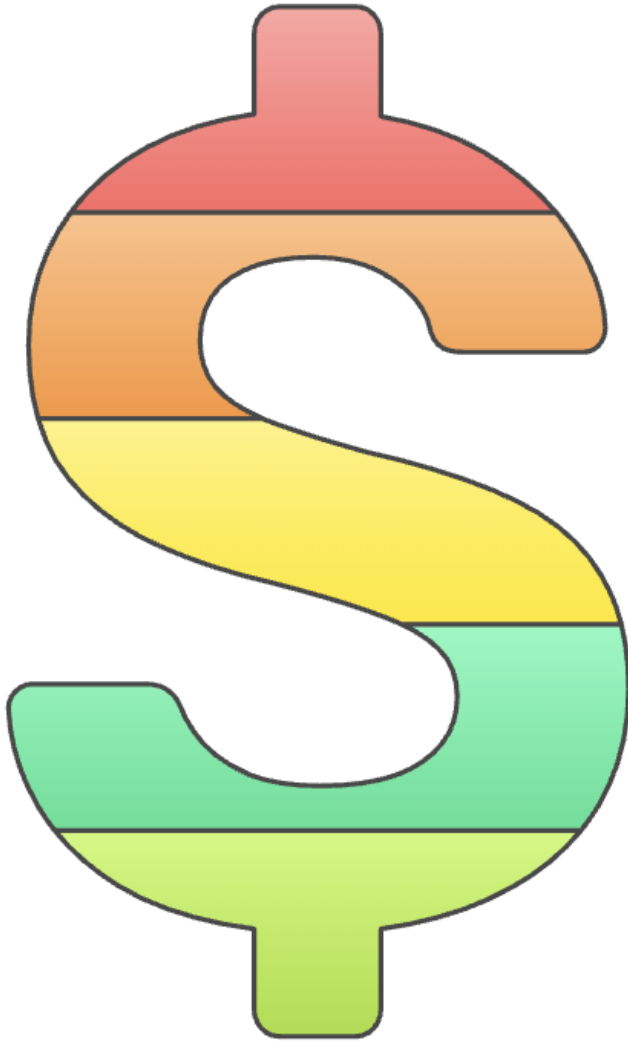
About UNPK: The first UNPK mission, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), was established in **May 1948** to monitor the **Armistice Agreement** between Israel and its Arab neighbors with a small team of **military observers**.

- They are deployed by the **UN Security Council** to support **ceasefires and peace agreements** and are called **Blue Helmets** due to the light blue color symbolizing **peace on the UN flag**.
- Currently, over **61,000 military and police peacekeepers** from **119 countries** and more than **7,000 civilian personnel** serve in **11 UN Peacekeeping Missions**.

Suez Canal offers 15% Discount to Cargo Ships



Navigating the Red Sea Crisis



Red Sea Security Crisis

The event causing trade disruptions



Maritime Trade Disruption

The impact on shipping routes



Transit Fee Discount

The financial incentive for ships



Large Container Ships

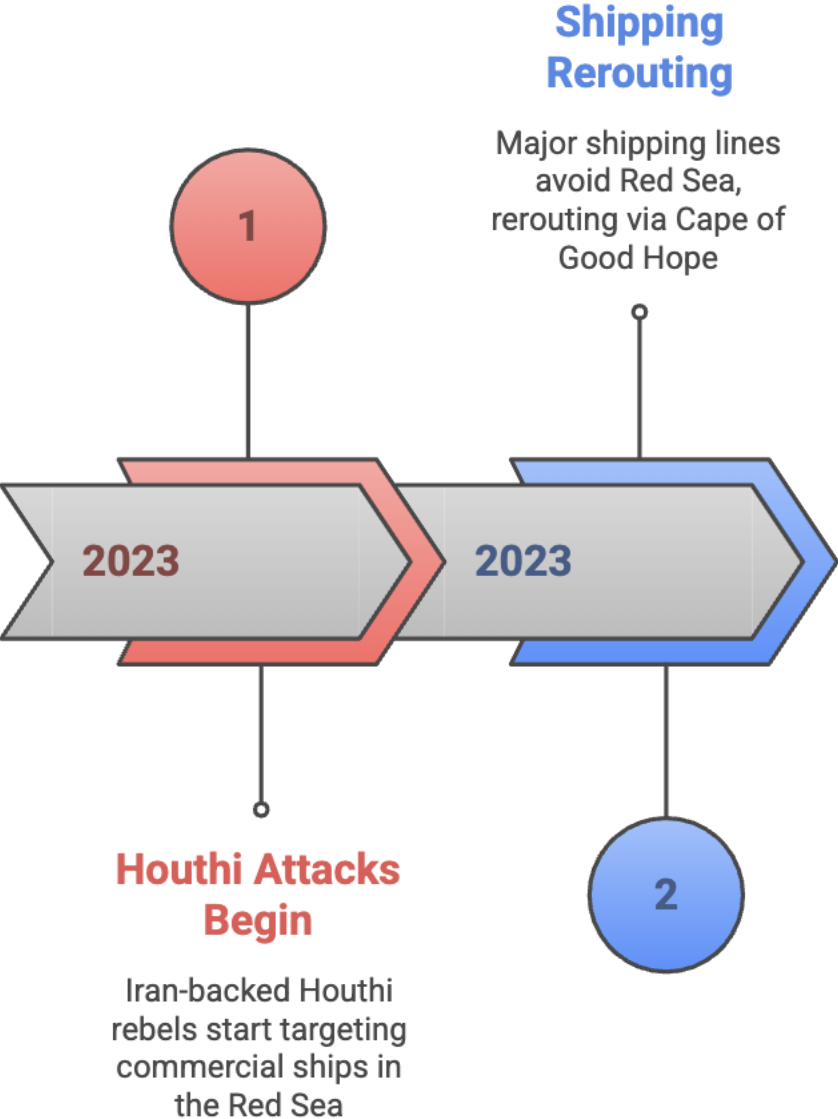
The beneficiaries of the discount



May 15, 2025

The effective date of the discount

Red Sea Shipping Crisis Timeline (2023)



Suez Canal Overview

What is the Suez Canal?

A 193-km artificial waterway connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, the shortest maritime route between Europe and Asia. Opened in 1869.

Does the Canal have locks?

No, it is a sea-level waterway, allowing efficient passage of vessels.

How busy is the Suez Canal?

12–15% of global commerce passes through it, making it one of the busiest waterways in the world.





REDSEA COUNTRIES

UPSCCOLORFULLNOTES.COM



Alternative route for shipping while Suez Canal blocked

— Using Suez Canal

10,000 nautical miles
(18,520km)

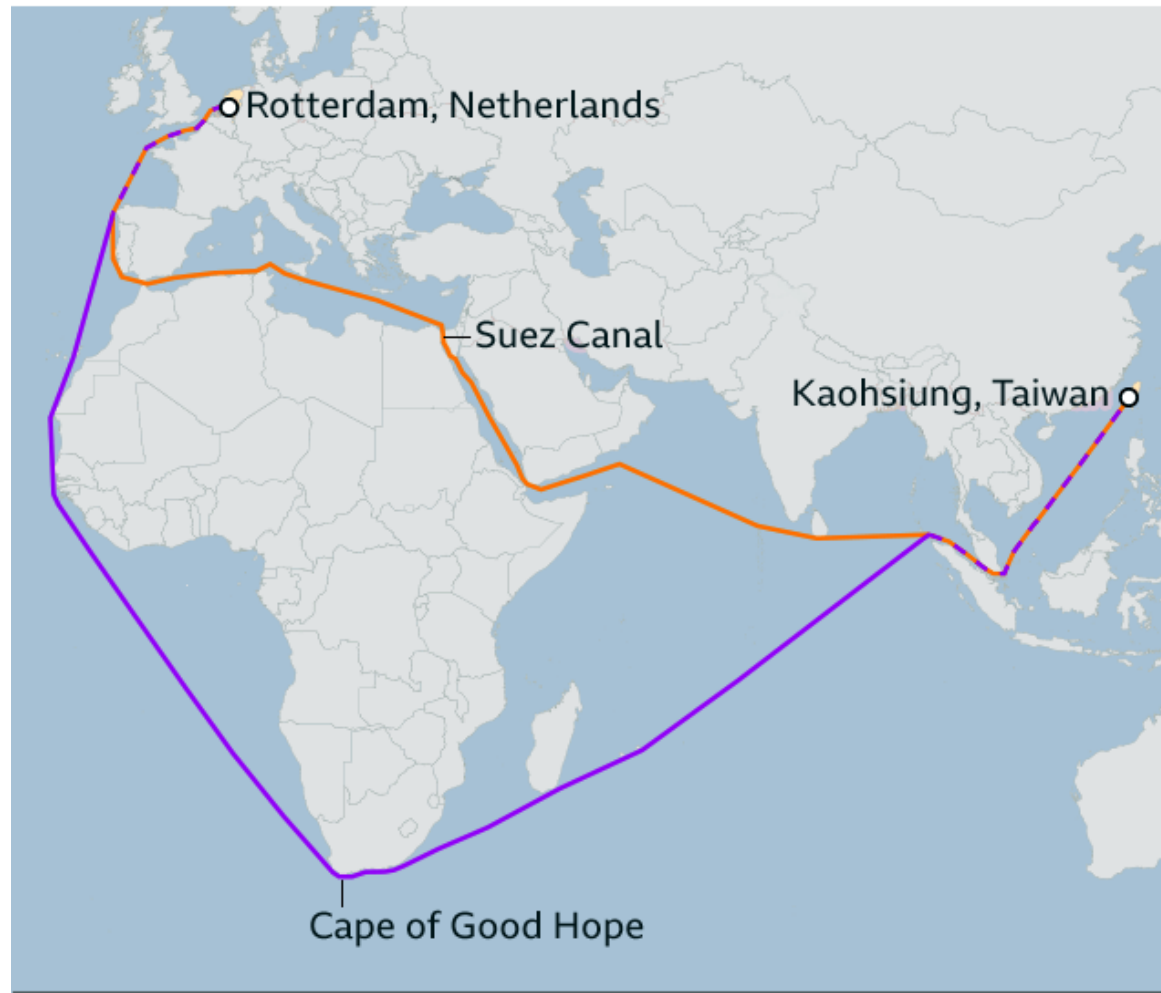
25.5 days*

— Around Cape of Good Hope

13,500 nautical miles
(25,002km)

34 days*

*Based on ship's average speed of 16.43 knots



The background of the image shows the silhouettes of a group of graduates. They are holding up their black graduation caps and white diplomas, celebrating their achievement. The scene is set against a light, clear sky, creating a high-contrast silhouette effect.

Supreme Court Mandates Three Years of Legal Practice for Judicial Service Aspirants

The Supreme Court has reinstated a pivotal eligibility criterion for aspirants of the judicial services examination.

The candidates must possess a minimum of three years of legal practice to qualify for entry-level judicial positions, such as Civil Judge (Junior Division) posts.

Background and Rationale

This decision overturns the 2002 ruling that allowed fresh law graduates to directly enter the judiciary without prior courtroom experience.

The court observed that this earlier approach led to challenges in judicial efficacy, as judges without practical experience often lacked the necessary skills to handle complex legal matters effectively.

Implementation Details



The three-year practice requirement will be calculated from the date of a candidate's provisional enrollment as an advocate, not from the date of passing the All India Bar Examination (AIBE).



To validate this experience, candidates must obtain a certificate from an advocate with at least 10 years of standing at the Bar, endorsed by a judicial officer of the respective court.



Additionally, experience gained as a law clerk to judges will be recognized as valid legal practice for this purpose.

High-Altitude Platform (HAP) Prototype

A large satellite dish antenna is positioned on a snowy mountain peak. The dish is dark and metallic, with a complex support structure. In the background, a range of snow-capped mountains is visible under a dark night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy. A bright blue light source, possibly a small satellite or a ground-based beacon, is visible near the base of the dish. The overall scene is serene and high-tech.

Development of High-Altitude Platform

Pre-Monsoon Tests

Successful completion of flight tests before the monsoon season.



Autopilot Integration

Integration of a certified autopilot system into the prototype.



Prototype Design

Initial design and development of the HAP prototype by NAL.




High-Altitude Platform (HAP)



What is HAP?

A High-Altitude Platform (HAP) is a solar-powered, unmanned stratospheric aircraft that operates at 17–22 km altitude, bridging the gap between terrestrial systems and satellites.



Aerospace Research Institutions

1



National Aerospace Laboratories located in Bengaluru. It is under CSIR.

NAL Bengaluru

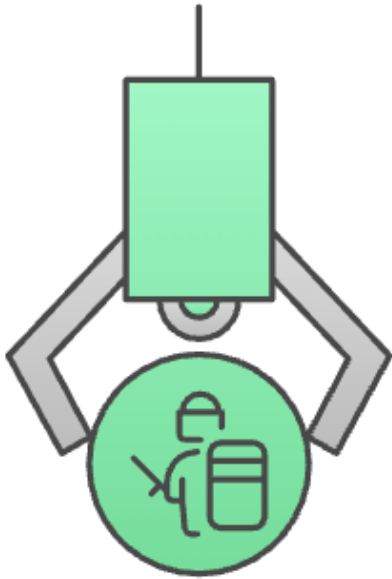
2



Aeronautical Test Range located in Chitradurga, Karnataka. It provides support.

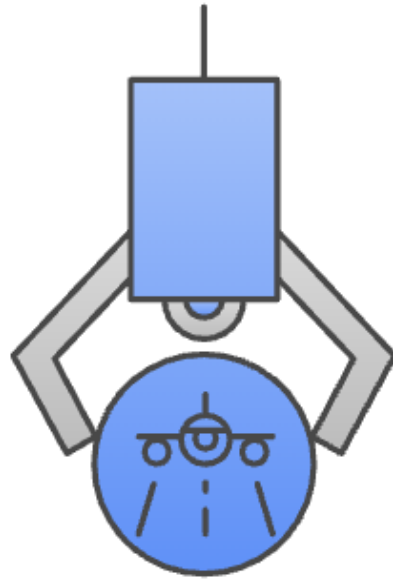
**ATR
Chitradurga**

Drone applications



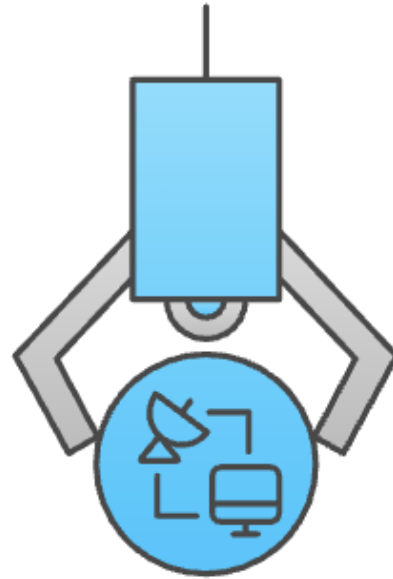
Border security

Patrolling borders
and surveillance



Aerial coverage

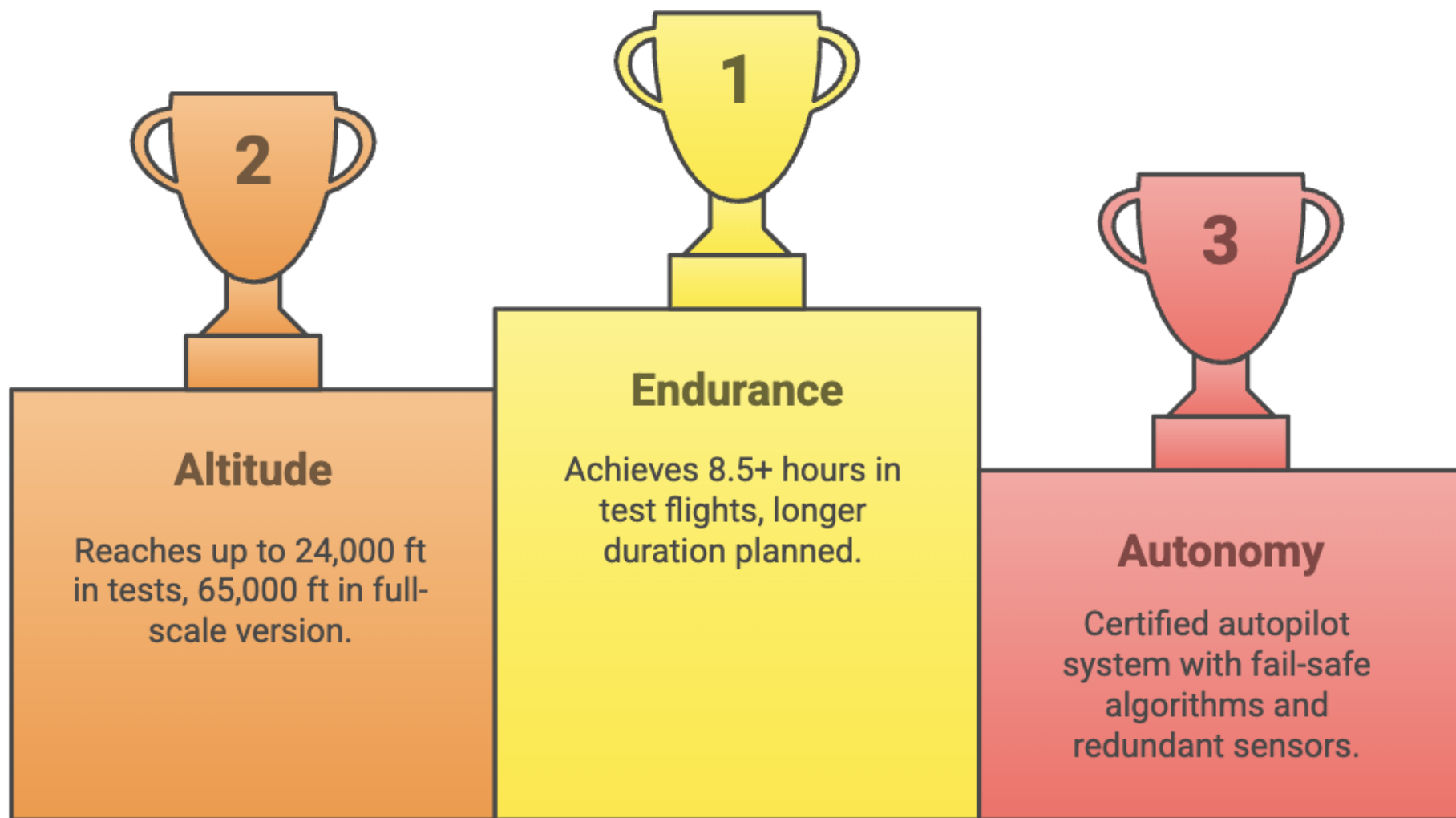
Providing coverage
for applications



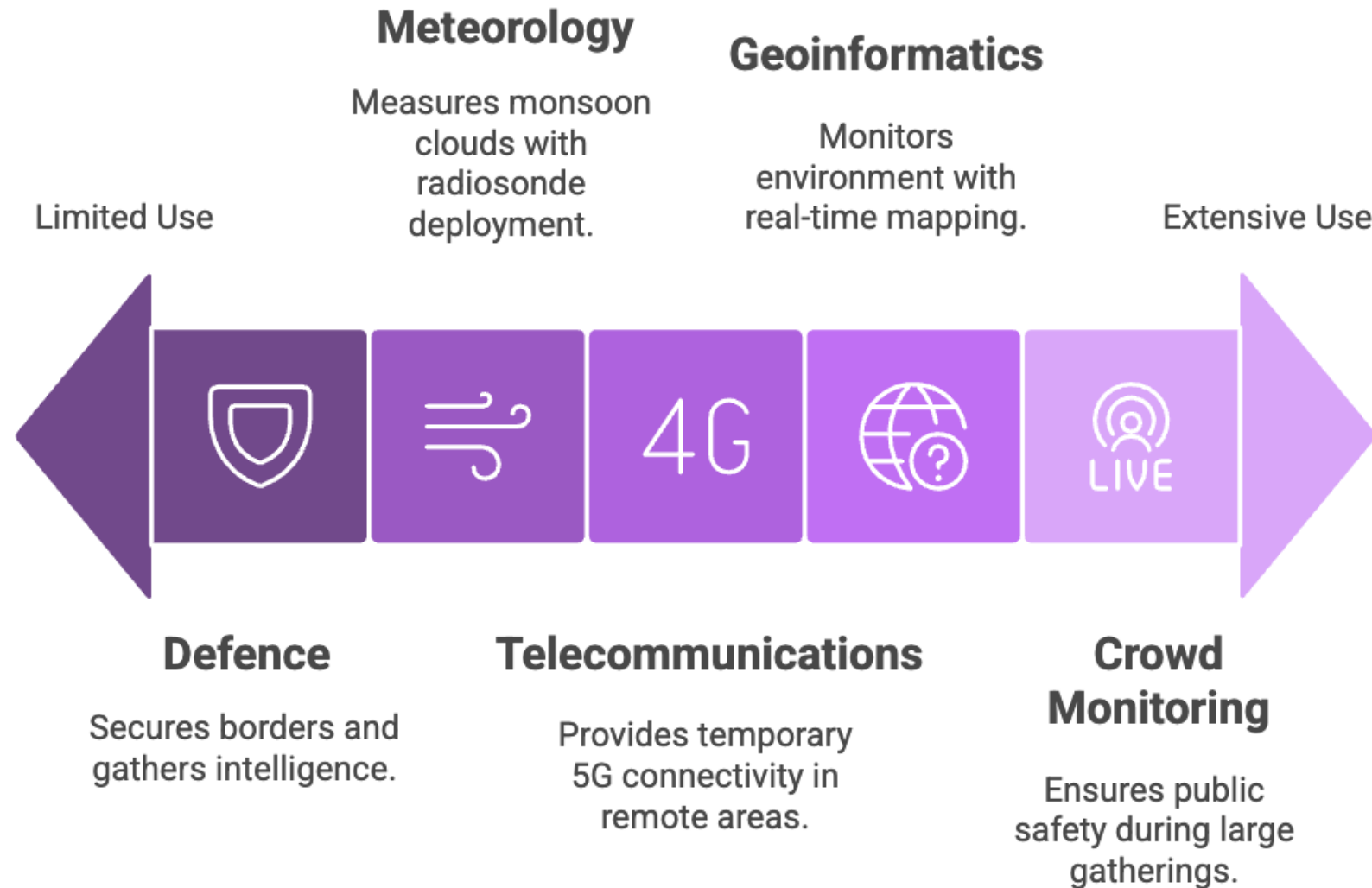
Communication platform

Telecommunication
relay and weather
data

Top Features of Solar-Powered Platform



Applications of drone technology across various fields of expertise.



A large, shiny, iridescent sphere with a pink heart inside. The sphere has a rainbow-like sheen. The background is a soft-focus pattern of many smaller pink hearts. The text "Fun fact - who has 3 hearts" is centered over the sphere.

Fun fact - who has 3 hearts



DID YOU KNOW?

ऑक्टोपस एक बहुत ही अद्भुत जीव है! इसके **तीन दिल** होते हैं। इनमें से दो दिल उसके **गलफड़ों** (वे हिस्से जो उसे पानी के नीचे सांस लेने में मदद करते हैं) के माध्यम से खून पंप करते हैं। **तीसरा दिल** उसके बाकी शरीर में **खून** पहुंचाता है।



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Word of the day

Sanguine:

a blood-red colour; confidently optimistic and cheerful; inclined to a healthy reddish colour often associated with outdoor life

Synonyms: florid, rubicund, ruddy

Usage: *She has a fresh and sanguine complexion.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/sanguinepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /'sæŋ.gwɪn/



Thank you
guys.

