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War is delightful to those
who have had no experience
of it.

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SCOTT W. HARRIS

Review reveals lapses
The order states that the violations were discovered during a review of the airline's transition to a new software used for crew scheduling, and were voluntarily disclosed by the airline. The software change happened in May 2004.

Israel hits Iran nuclear site, gears up for long war

Iran launches missiles, drones as Israeli military told to be prepared for a 'prolonged campaign'

IAEA confirms latest attack on two centrifuge production sites in Isfahan research facility

The international agency rules out 'radiological consequences' as site has 'no nuclear material'

Associated Press
TEL AVIV

Israel's targeted attacks have struck an Iranian nuclear research facility in Isfahan and killed three senior Iranian commanders in Qom, the Israeli military said on Saturday, while emphasising it was preparing for the possibility of a lengthy war.

Smoke rose from an area near a mountain in Isfahan, where Isfahan province's deputy governor for security affairs, Akbar Salehi, confirmed that the Israeli strikes damaged the facility but caused no casualties.

The target was two centrifuge production sites,

according to an Israeli military official speaking on condition of anonymity. It was the second attack on Isfahan, which was hit in the first 24 hours of the war as part of Israel's goal to destroy Iran's nuclear programme.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed the latest attack. "We know this facility well. There was no nuclear material at this site and therefore the attack on it will have no radiological consequences," IAEA chief Rafael Grossi was quoted as saying.

Iran launched a new wave of drones and missiles at Israel, but there were no immediate reports



War wounds: An injured man being treated in a hospital in Tehran, Iran, on Saturday amid the ongoing conflict with Israel. REUTERS

of significant damage. The Magen David Adom rescue service said a drone hit a two-story building in northern Israel, with no casualties. The Israeli official called it a "small bar-

rage" that was largely intercepted by Israel's defences. The official estimated that Israel's military has taken out more than 50% of Iran's launchers.

Israeli military's chief

spokesperson later said that the Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir has told the Army to be prepared for a "prolonged campaign".

Fordow out of reach

Barring a commando raid or even a nuclear strike, Iran's underground Fordow uranium enrichment facility is considered out of reach to all but American "bunker-buster" bombs. U.S. President Donald Trump is weighing active U.S. military involvement in the war. On Saturday, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said "I think that it [U.S. involvement] would be very, very dangerous for everyone."

He spoke on the sidelines of an Organization of Islamic Cooperation meeting in Türkiye.

The war between the regional foes erupted on June 13, with Israeli airstrikes targeting Iran's nuclear and military sites, top Generals and nuclear scientists. At least 722 people, including 285 civilians, have been killed in Iran, and more than 2,500 wounded, according to a Washington-based Iranian human rights group.

Iran has retaliated by firing more than 450 missiles and 1,000 drones at Israel, according to Israeli army. At least 24 people in Israel have been killed and hundreds wounded.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said Israel's military operation will continue "for as long as it takes" to eliminate what he called the existential threat of Iran's nuclear programme and ballistic missile arsenal.

Talks held in Geneva on Friday had failed to produce a breakthrough. Iran's Foreign Minister said he was open to further dialogue while emphasising that Tehran had no interest in negotiating with the U.S. while Israel continues to attack.

827 INDIANS EVACUATED

» PAGE 3

IRAN COMMANDERS KILLED

» PAGE 12

1. Current Developments

- Israel launched targeted attacks on Iranian nuclear research facilities in **Isfahan**.
- Israeli airstrikes killed three senior Iranian commanders in **Qom**.
- The attacked sites were **centrifuge production facilities** near a mountain in Isfahan.
- Iranian official **Akbar Salehi** confirmed facility damage but no casualties.

2. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Reaction

- IAEA confirmed the site had no nuclear material.
- No radiological consequences are expected from the attack.

3. Iran's Retaliation

- Iran launched over **450 missiles** and **1,000 drones** at Israel.
- Israel reported:
 - No significant damage from drone strikes.
 - At least **24 deaths** and hundreds injured.
- Israel's military claims to have destroyed over **50% of Iran's launchers**.

5. Geopolitical Situation

- War erupted on **June 13**, with Israeli strikes targeting Iranian nuclear & military sites.
- Over **722 people killed** in Iran, including **285 civilians**; more than **2,500 wounded**.
- Talks in **Geneva** failed to produce any breakthrough.
- Iran's Foreign Minister indicated willingness for dialogue, but no progress yet.

6. Strategic Sites

- **Fordow Uranium Enrichment Facility:**
 - Deep underground, heavily fortified.
 - Considered out of reach for conventional strikes.
 - Only "bunker-buster" bombs (mainly American) can threaten it.

5. JCPOA (Iran Nuclear Deal)

- Signed: 2015, between Iran & P5+1 nations.
- Iran agreed to curb its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.
- U.S. under Trump withdrew in 2018, escalating tensions.

6. Historical Conflicts

- **Operation Opera (1981):** Israel destroyed Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor.
- **2020:** Assassination of Iranian nuclear scientist **Mohsen Fakhrizadeh**, widely attributed to Israel.

- Q. The Fordow Nuclear Facility is located in:
 - a) Iraq
 - b) Israel
 - c) Iran
 - d) Saudi Arabia

DGCA orders action against 3 AI officials over 'systemic failures' in managing pilots

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered Air India to remove three officials – including a top executive in the flight operations department – from their roles and responsibilities, citing “systemic failures” and “multiple violations” related to the validity of pilot licences and their rest requirements, according to multiple sources.

The DGCA directive issued on Friday, a copy of which has been reviewed by *The Hindu*, states that internal disciplinary proceedings must be initiated against these officials without delay. There was no official confirmation from the DGCA, but the airline said in a statement that it has “implemented” such an order. The aviation safety regulator also warned that any future violation discovered in an audit related to these issues could result in penalties, suspension of licences, or withdrawal of the airline’s permit to fly.

The order comes during heightened scrutiny of Air India following last week’s crash in Ahmedabad.

Lapses in licenses

The specific lapses mentioned in the order pertain to the licensing requirements of flight crew, their rest hours, and recency requirements, which is the experience a pilot must have within a specific time-frame in operating an aircraft safely and legally, including a specific number of takeoffs and landings.

“Of particular concern



The order comes during heightened scrutiny of Air India following the crash of its flight AI-171 in Ahmedabad last week. REUTERS

Process to identify several victims of plane crash still on

Press Trust of India
AHMEDABAD

Nine days after the Ahmedabad Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad on June 12, the process to identify several victims is still under way.

The authorities have asked eight families to submit the DNA sample of another relative as the previous ones failed to match with that of victims.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 5

is the absence of strict disciplinary measures against key officials directly responsible for these lapses,” the directive states.

One of the key officials against whom the DGCA has asked for a disciplinary action is Air India’s Divisional Vice-President of its Integrated Operations Control Centre (IOCC). Another executive oversees the crew scheduling division, and the third handles planning within the division.

In its statement, Air India said that after the DGCA rebuke, the company’s Chief Operations Officer Basil Kwauk will provide direct oversight to the IOCC. Mr. Kwauk has joined Air India from Singapore Airlines on deputation and had previously

served at Vistara on deputation. An IOCC is essentially the “nerve centre” of an airline, responsible for coordinating and managing various operational aspects of flights to ensure safe, efficient, and legally compliant flights.

It falls under the Operations department of an airline that oversees flights, pilots, and cabin crew, including their duty rosters.

Review reveals lapses

The order states that the violations were discovered during a review of the airline’s transition to a new software used for crew scheduling, and were voluntarily disclosed by the airline. The software change happened in May 2024.

- **Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** has ordered Air India to remove three senior officials over:
 - **Systemic failures**
 - **Multiple violations** related to pilot license management and rest requirements.
 - Action follows heightened scrutiny after the **Air India plane crash (Flight AI-171) in Ahmedabad on June 12, 2024.**
-

2. Specific Lapses Highlighted

- Issues related to:
 - **Licensing requirements of flight crew**
 - **Rest hours of pilots**
 - **Recency requirements:** Pilots must complete a specific number of takeoffs and landings within a timeframe.
- Lack of strict disciplinary measures against responsible officials flagged.

IN BRIEF



Gas flow reduced at ONGC blowout well in Assam

The flow rate of gas at an affected rig in eastern Assam's Sivasagar district has reduced substantially, the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) said on Saturday. Officials of the corporation stated that an international expert team from the U.S.-based CH2D PwC Engineering Control affirmed the effectiveness of the ONGC's approach in controlling the gas leak at well R28-477A. The blowout at this rig happened on June 12. The Maharashtra exploration company also said medical assistance was being provided at a relief camp for the people evacuated from nearby villages soon after the blowout. Around 1,500 people were evacuated.

CBI probes ex-JNPA official, firms in \$800-crore scam

The CBI has registered a case against the former Chief Manager of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) at Navi Mumbai, and four others, including a retired firm, on charges of cheating, conspiracy, corruption and causing losses of over \$800 crore to JNPA. The statement released on Friday said that a consortium of two private firms were awarded contracts to deepen the navigational channel at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Nava Sheva, Mumbai, to facilitate entry of bigger vessels under a Capital Dredging Project, with a private consulting company, Tata Consulting Engineers, from Mumbai as the Project Management Consultant (PMC).

Illegal sand mining continues along Yamuna: Cong. leader

Former Haryana Minister and senior Congress leader Karan Dalal has written to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), flagging what he described as "ongoing illegal and unregulated sand mining operations along the banks of the Yamuna", particularly in the districts of Patiala, Faridkot, Sonapat, and Yamuna Nagar. He urged the Tribunal to initiate "urgent, firm, and comprehensive action against all individuals and entities involved". In a letter, he alleged that "a systematic and large-scale plunder of the Yamuna riverbed" was under way, "orchestrated by a powerful, well-organised and influential sand mining mafia operating with blatant impunity".

BJP worker found dead in West Bengal's Hooghly

A BJP worker, Shekha Baidulla, was found dead under mysterious circumstances in his home at Goghat in Hooghly district of West Bengal on Saturday. Baidulla was reportedly found hanging in his house. The BJP has alleged that it was a "political murder". The police sent the body for post-mortem and initiated a probe. "In this specific case at the Goghat police station, an FIR has been registered against unknown persons under Section 303 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita (murder). After the post-mortem examination, the surgeon verbally opined that the death was due to hanging," a high-ranking official of the West Bengal Police told *The Hindu*.

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	6	4	9	2	7	1	3	5		
1	3	5	2	8	4	9	7	6		
2	7	1	3	5	6	4	8			
3	8	6	5	4	9	7	2			
4	9	2	1	3	8	5	6			
5	2	3	7	6	1	4	9			
6	4	8	9	2	3	7	5			
7	5	3	4	1	2	8				

India set to integrate rare-blood donor registry with e Rakt Kosh

The integration will allow those with rare blood groups to access a centralised system; the challenge is to ensure that the country has a steady, motivated group of donors who stay connected to the blood banks, says the Director of ICMR-NHII

Hindu Shalan Perappadan
CHANDRAPUR (MAHARASHTRA)

In what would be a life, time and cost saving move for people with rare blood groups in India, the Union Health Ministry is looking at integrating the national Rare Donor Registry with the national online platform for blood bank management and blood availability information, e Rakt Kosh.

The integration will allow those with rare blood groups to access a centralised system developed under the National Health Mission (NHM), providing details of blood banks, blood availability, and blood donation camps across the country. Eventually, it will help people find blood and blood banks, and assist blood banks manage their stock and donors.

"The Indian Council of Medical Research National Institute of Immunohaematology (ICMR-NHII), under the leadership of Dr. Madhakar, created a database of 4,000 carefully selected donor blood over 300 rare blood mark-



This system is used at the registry includes ultra-rare types such as Bombay, P-null and Rh-null, in various masses

ers. It helps doctors find rare and specially matched blood quickly. Rare Donor Registry of India (RDRI) platform has been developed to help patients across India," said Dr. Madhakar, Director for Research, Management and Control of Hematopathologies (ICMR-34).

More access She said the integration project would be taken up

Rh-null blood group. It also helps ensure safe transfusions where matches are available for patients missing multiple antigens (immune system's defence cells and sickle cell) to prevent complications.

The group has also developed a special blood screening kit tailored for Indian patients and it uses DNA test multiplex PCR to quickly identify rare blood types," Dr. Madhakar said.

She added that in the past, this registry has transformed nearly impossible searches into life-saving solutions, and with its integration and reach, India could work towards ensuring that no life is lost due to lack of blood.

Working the area of effectively managing haemoglobinopathies, the ICMR-NHII has developed a point-of-care test to detect life-threatening blood related genetic disorders.

"The Health Technology Assessments (HTA) led by Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and ICMR-CIMRI and NHII helped cut the cost of sickle cell diagnostic kits from ₹50

to under ₹50 per test, saving the government nearly ₹1,577 crore," said a note issued by the ICMR-CIMRI.

India has developed testing for Haemophilia A and Von Willebrand Disease and now World Federation for Haemophilia has shown interest in procuring these tests for deployment in countries where the disease is prevalent. For India this new rapid, visual card testing device has made testing possible even at primary health centers," Dr. Madhakar said.

This upgraded testing is cheaper than what is currently available. India has about 1.4 lakh haemophilia patients which is the second highest globally after Brazil.

Haemophilia is a rare genetic disorder where the blood doesn't clot properly due to a deficiency in clotting factors.

The technology for the PCR test for these conditions was transferred to the Department of Biotechnology firm Bharat Biotech which commercialised it under the brand name BioScan in August 2023.

Treat Shabir Shah without delay, say J&K leaders

The Hindu Bureau
Srinagar

ICPMI leader M.Y. Tarigami and J&K Apni Party president Abul Bakari on Saturday sought the intervention of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to ensure treatment for an ill separatist leader Shabir Shah in the Tihar Jail and consider his bail plea.

Shabir Shah was arrested by the National Investigation Agency in 2017 in a terror financing case. Reports say the separatist leader, now 72, is suffering from prostate cancer and requires immediate surgery.

"In view of his deteriorating health, and considering his advanced age and multiple comorbidities, it is imperative that he be granted bail so that his family can provide the necessary pre and post-operative care in a stable and supportive environment," Mr. Tarigami said.

"Ideological differences should not obstruct the basic rights of any individual," he said. J&K Apni Party chief Abul Bakari also requested the Union Home Minister to ensure that he receives proper medical attention without delay.

Meitei organisation seeks farmer safety zone around Imphal Valley

The Hindu Bureau
Imphal

The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (CCCOMI), an apex organisation representing the Meitei community, has demanded a farmer safety zone on the periphery of the Imphal Valley.

The demand followed a bullet injury sustained by Singhcham Bheir Singh, a cultivator in Bishnupur district's Phibula area on Thursday. The area adjoins the foothills of Churachandpur district, which is controlled by the Kuki-Zo people.

Bishnupur is one of five districts comprising the Imphal Valley, which covers about 80% of Manipur's



The RIF has had to step in many times after tensions over farmland disputes among Meitei and Kuki communities in Manipur. (P)

total geographical area. "Singcham Bheir Singh was shot from point-blank range, barely 30 metres away from the Saabastra Sema Rai (SBR) security line. This act of terror occurred after an

outrageous breach through those lines of security," the Border Security Force (BSF), Army, and SBR, raising serious concerns about the intent, efficiency, and reliability of the current security de-

ployment in the valley," the CCCOMI said in a statement on Saturday.

The organisation said farmers living on the periphery of the valley are under a protective shield, as they had been under attack from gunmen on the hills around. It said declaring a "farmer safety zone" with shoot-at-sight orders would deter armed intruders, especially those carrying assault rifles.

"The entire aggression belt along the border and canal zones must also be officially designated as a 'no-arms zone', and any intruder carrying firearms must face the consequences of a shoot-at-sight order," a CCCOMI spokesperson said.

FATF links dual-use cargo seized by India to Pak. agency

The Hindu Bureau
New Delhi

A dual-use equipment seized by India from a Pakistan-bound merchant vessel in 2020 is linked to Islamabad's National Development Complex, which is involved in the country's missile development programme, a new report by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global anti-money laundering watchdog, has said.

The report listed the case under a section on the misuse of the maritime and shipping sectors, including to transport a range of commodities, including dual-use equipment.

In 2020, Indian Customs authorities seized an Asian-flagged ship bound for Pakistan. During an investigation, Indian authorities confirmed that documents mis-declared, the shipment's dual-use equipment.

Indian investigators certified the items for shipment to be "autoclaves", which are used for sensitive high-energy materials, and for insulation and chemical coating of missile motors," the report said. It said these sensitive items are included in dual-use export control lists of the National Technology Control Regime (NTCR).

The bill of lading of the seized cargo provided evidence of the "link between the importer and the National Development Complex, which is involved in the development of long-range ballistic missiles," it said. The export of equipment such as autoclaves without formal approval from various authorities is in violation of the existing law, the FATF said. Islamabad's National Development Complex (NDC) has played a crucial role in the development of Pakistan's missile programme. India seized the dual-use equipment from merchant vessel Da Qui Yun at

Plane crash: nine days on, process to ascertain identity of victims continues

The Hindu Bureau
Ahmedabad

Nine days after the Ahmedabad plane crash, the process to identify several victims is still underway and the authorities have asked eight families to submit the DNA sample of another relative as the previous ones failed to match.

The Ahmedabad-based filmmaker Mahesh Jirawala was reported missing following the June 12 air crash. The police said that the matching of DNA samples confirmed that the following which his mortal remains were handed over to his family.

In Maharashtra, relatives and friends gave an emotional farewell to the pilot, Parthak, and crew members of the ill-fated flight - at Madhapur in Thane district and in Pune's Chinchwad near Pune city respectively.

The London-bound Air India flight AI-171 carrying



Relative participants in the last rites of four family members who died in the plane crash. (N) 30414

242 passengers and crew on board. It was on its way to Mumbai from Ahmedabad moments after it took off from the city airport. The plane crashed into a residential area, but one on board, and 20 on the ground as the aircraft crashed into a residential area. The State asked to give a sample of another relative's DNA tests after the first one did not match, an official said.

"Unless there is a match, bodies cannot be handed over to the family," the State said. The State medical superintendent

Air India starts releasing interim compensation

MUMBAI

As from Saturday said it has started releasing the interim compensation of ₹25 lakh to the families of the deceased and survivors of the June 12 plane crash. These families have received a payment so far and the remaining compensation is being processed, Air India said.

parent Rakesh Joshi said. "When there is a long-term identification process, then you can ask another question to the families," he said.

To ensure that families receive the benefits of the insurance policy quickly, the Financial Action Task Force, along with associated institutions, local administration, the State government's health and other departments and various agencies are working tirelessly.



The FATF report listed the case under a section on the misuse of the maritime sector. (P)

Indian investigators certified the items as autoclaves, used in missile motors, says report

Kandla port in Gujarat on February 3, 2020.

Loopholes The report noted significant vulnerabilities in the global financial system in countering the financing of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

"Despite the grave threat posed by proliferation financing, only 16 per cent of countries assessed by the FATF and its global network have demonstrated high or substantial effectiveness" in a process that evaluates the implementation of targeted financial sanctions under the United Nations Security Council resolutions on proliferation.

The report said that unless the public and private sectors urgently bolster technical compliance and effectiveness, these sectors to finance WMD proliferation will continue to exhibit weaknesses in the existing controls.

The report provided a detailed analysis of the evolving methods and techniques used to evade proliferation financing-related sanctions. "Illicit actors are employing increasingly sophisticated methods to evade sanctions and circumvent export controls," it said.

India set to integrate rare-blood donor registry with e-Rakt Kosh

The integration will allow those with rare blood groups to access a centralised system; the challenge is to ensure that the country has a steady, motivated group of donors who stay connected to the blood banks, says the Director of ICMR-NIIH

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
CHANDRAPUR (MAHARASHTRA)

In what would be a life, time and cost saving move for people with rare blood groups in India, the Union Health Ministry is looking at integrating the national Rare Donor Registry with the national online platform for blood bank management and blood availability information, e-Rakt Kosh.

The integration will allow those with rare blood groups to access a centralised system developed under the National Health Mission (NHS), providing details of blood banks, blood availability, and blood donation camps across the country. Essentially, it will help people find blood and blood banks, and assist blood banks manage their stock and donors.

"The Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Immunohaematology (ICMR-NIIH), along with four partnering institutes, created a database of 4,000 carefully screened donors tested for over 300 rare blood mark-



This system is useful as the registry includes ultra-rare types such as Bombay, P-Null and Rh-null. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

ers. It helps doctors find rare and specially matched blood quickly. Rare Donor Registry of India (RDRI) platform has been developed to help patients across India," said Manisha R. Madkaikar, Director, ICMR-NIIH, and Centre for Research, Management and Control of Haemoglobinopathies (CRMCH).

More access

She said the integration project would be taken up

soon and offer more access and support to those with rare blood groups.

"The challenge is to ensure that we have a steady, motivated group of donors who stay connected to the blood banks," she said.

Explaining how this registry for rare blood group helps, Dr. Madkaikar said that this system helped find rare matches as the registry included ultra-rare types such as the Bombay blood group, P-Null, and

Rh-null blood group. It also helps ensure safer transfusions where matches are available for patients missing multiple antigens (common in thalassemia and sickle cell) to prevent complications.

"The group has also developed a special blood screening kit tailored for Indian patients and it uses DNA test (multiplex PCR) to quickly identify rare blood types," Dr. Madkaikar said.

She added that in the past, this registry has transformed nearly impossible searches into life-saving solutions, and with its integration and reach, India could work towards ensuring that no life is lost due to lack of blood.

Working the area of effectively managing haemoglobinopathies, the ICMR-NIIH has developed a point-of-care test to detect life-threatening blood related genetic disorders.

"The Health Technology Assessments (HTA) led by Department of Health Research (DHR) and ICMR-CRMCH and NIIH helped cut the cost of sickle cell diagnostic kits from ₹350

to under ₹50 per test, saving the government nearly ₹1,857 crore," said a note issued by the ICMR-CRMCH.

"India has developed testing for Haemophilia A and Von Willebrand Disease and now World Federation for Hemophilia has shown interest in procuring these tests for deployment in countries where the disease is prevalent. For India this new rapid, visual card testing device has made testing possible even at primary health centers," Dr. Madkaikar said.

This upgraded testing is cheaper than what is currently available.

India has about 1.4 lakh haemophilia patients which is the second highest globally after Brazil. Haemophilia is a rare genetic disorder where the blood doesn't clot properly due to a deficiency in clotting factors.

The technology for the POC test for these conditions was transferred to the Bengaluru-based biotechnology firm Bhat Biotech which commercialised it under the brand name BioScan in August 2023.

1. Government Initiative

- The **Union Health Ministry** is integrating:
 - **National Rare Donor Registry (RDRD)** with
 - **e-Rakt Kosh**, India's national online platform for blood bank management and blood availability.

2. Purpose

- To allow people with **rare blood groups** to access a centralized, quick, and cost-effective system.
- To ensure timely access to rare blood during emergencies.

3. Supporting Institutions

- **Indian Council of Medical Research - National Institute of Immunohaematology (ICMR-NIIH).**
- Collaboration with:
 - **Centre for Research, Management and Control of Haemoglobinopathies (CRMCH).**
 - **Department of Health Research (DHR).**
- A database of **4,000+ carefully screened rare blood donors** has been created.

4. Types of Rare Blood Groups Covered

- **Bombay Blood Group** (hh phenotype)
 - **P-Null**
 - **Rh-Null**
 - Other ultra-rare blood types.
-

Benefits of the Integration

- Faster identification and access to rare blood.
- Life-saving solutions for patients with:
 - **Thalassemia**
 - **Sickle Cell Disease**
- Screening kit tailored for Indian patients using **multiplex PCR (DNA test)**.
- Supports the **haemophilia** patient community.

Technological Upgrades

- Development of rapid, low-cost visual testing devices for:
 - Haemophilia A
 - Von Willebrand Disease
 - Cost reduced to under ₹50 per test, compared to global costs.
-

India's Haemophilia Scenario

- Approx. 1.4 lakh haemophilia patients.
- Second-highest global prevalence after **Brazil**.
- Haemophilia: Rare genetic disorder where blood doesn't clot properly.

- **Q1. The e-Rakt Kosh portal is implemented under which ministry?**
- a) Ministry of Science and Technology
- b) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- c) Ministry of Social Justice
- d) Ministry of Rural Development

LONDON

Internet service partially restored in Iran, says U.K.-based watchdog



Internet service was partially restored in Iran on Saturday, after Tehran imposed a blackout during its war with Israel, U.K.-based online watchdog NetBlocks said. "Metrics show a partial restoration in Internet connectivity in Iran after a ~62 hour shutdown."

ON BOARD THE ANANAGI

Japan, U.S. and Philippines hold joint coast guard exercises



Japan, the United States and the Philippines held a joint coast guard drills off Japan's southern coast, after the three countries warned against Chinese activity in disputed regional waters. Tensions with China over the East and South China Seas have pushed Japan to deepen ties with the Philippines and the U.S.

LOS ANGELES

Troops deployed in Los Angeles still 'necessary', says J.D. Vance



U.S. Vice-President J.D. Vance said that troops deployed to Los Angeles this month were still needed despite a week of calm in the protest-hit city. President Donald Trump has sent 4,000 National Guard members and 700 Marines, to protect federal property and personnel, after demonstrations over immigration rule.

KYIV

Ukraine received Russian soldiers' remains in exchanges; Zelenskyy



Ukraine's President said that Russia repatriated at least 20 of its own dead soldiers in recent exchanges with Ukraine, describing it as a result of Moscow's disorganization in carrying out large swaps of wounded POWs and remains of troops. Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that an Israeli soldier was among the dead.

Killed 3 Iranian commanders in latest wave of strikes: Israel

Israel's strike in Qom, south of Tehran, targeted top Iranian official in charge of coordination with Hamas; not prepared to negotiate with U.S. as long as aggression continues, says Iranian Foreign Minister; Trump unlikely to ask Israel to halt attacks

Agence France-Press

JERUSALEM

Israel said on Saturday it had killed three more Iranian commanders in its unprecedented bombing campaign against the Islamic Republic, which Foreign Minister Iradoun Saad claimed had delayed Tehran's alleged progress towards a nuclear weapon by two years.

Israel's military said a strike in Qom south of Tehran successfully targeted top Iranian official Saad, in charge of coordination with Palestinian militant group Hamas, adding two other commanders



from Iran's Revolutionary Guards were also killed overnight. At Israel continued to strike Iran's nuclear facilities and military targets, Mr. Saad said in an interview.

that we can do there in order to remove this threat," Mr. Saad told German newspaper Bild, asserting Israel's onslaught would continue.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in Istanbul on Saturday for a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to discuss the conflict.

Meanwhile, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan on Saturday accused Israel of leading West Asia to a "catastrophic disaster" by attacking Iran on June 13. "There is no Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, Yemeni or Iranian problem, but there is clearly an Israeli problem," he said.

But Mr. Araghchi told NBC, News that "we are not

prepared to negotiate with them [the United States] anymore, as long as the aggression continues."

Mr. Trump, dismissive of European diplomatic efforts, also said he was unlikely to ask Israel to stop its attacks to get Iran back to the table. "If somebody's winning, it's a little bit harder to do," he said.

Meanwhile, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan on Saturday accused Israel of leading West Asia to a "catastrophic disaster" by attacking Iran on June 13. "There is no Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, Yemeni or Iranian problem, but there is clearly an Israeli problem," he said.

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'Bangladesh polls cannot be held without govt.'s support'

Press Trust of India

DHAKA

The government plays a central role in the election process, the head of Bangladesh's Election Commission said on Saturday, asserting that holding polls in "not possible" without its support.

Chief Election Commissioner AMR Nazim Uddin said that no matter how independent the top election body is said to be, "it is not possible to hold an election without the government's support."

He added that the commission requires assistance from law enforcement agencies, the administration, and its officials to conduct the election.

Mr. Nazim Uddin made the remarks after inaugu-



Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus had announced that the national election will be held in the first half of April next year. REUTERS

rating a training programme in the capital. "You'll learn everything when the time comes. We do have an operational plan - though I would not call it a roadmap," he said, responding to another question.

Earlier this month, Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus announced that the national election will be held in the first half of April next year.

On the draw



Pakistan nominates Trump for 2026 Nobel Peace Prize

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan government on Saturday said it has decided to formally recommend U.S. President Donald Trump for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize for his "decisive diplomatic intervention" during the recent India-Pakistan conflict.

The announcement came three days after Mr. Trump hosted Pakistan Army chief Asim Munir at the White House. The announcement came in a post on X: "The government of Pakistan has decided to formally recommend President Donald J. Trump for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of his decisive diplomatic intervention and pivotal leadership during the recent India-Pakistan conflict," the post said.

Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated after the April 22 Pahalgam

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terror attack, with India carrying out precision strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on May 7. The on-ground hostilities between the Indian and Pakistan sides that lasted for four days ended with an understanding of stopping the military actions following talks between the directors general of military operations of both sides on May 10.

Pak. prides Trump: Mr. Trump has been persistently claiming that he stopped a war between India and Pakistan. New Delhi has been maintaining that India's force counter-attack forced Pakistan to

pled for ending the hostilities. Pakistan's post on X said that at a moment of heightened regional turbulence, President Trump demonstrated great strategic foresight and stellar statesmanship through robust diplomatic engagement.

It further stated that the U.S. President "de-escalated a rapidly deteriorating situation, ultimately securing a ceasefire and averting a broader conflict between the two nuclear states that would have had catastrophic consequences for millions of people in the region and beyond." "This intervention stands as testament to his [Trump's] role as a genuine peace-maker and his commitment to conflict resolution through dialogue," it read.

It also acknowledged Mr. Trump's "sincere offer" to help resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

DR Congo, Rwanda make peace, says U.S. President

Agence France-Press

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump took credit on Friday for a peace deal negotiated in Washington between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda - and complained that he would not win a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

The warring African nations said in a joint statement on Wednesday that they had initiated an agreement aimed at ending the conflict in eastern DR Congo - to be formally signed in the U.S. capital next week.

"This is a Great Day for Africa and, quite frankly, a Great Day for the World," Mr. Trump said in a Truth Social post confirming the breakthrough.

But his triumphant tone darkened as he complained that he had been overlooked by the Norwegian Nobel Committee for his mediating role in conflicts between India and Pakistan, as well as Serbia and Kosovo.

He also demanded credit for "keeping peace" between Egypt and Ethiopia and brokering the Abraham Accords. The President said officials from DR Congo and Rwanda would be in Washington on Monday for the signing, although their joint statement said they would put pen to paper on June 27.

The resource-rich eastern DR Congo, which borders Rwanda, has been plagued by violence for three decades, with a resurgence since the anti-government M23 armed group went on a renewed offensive at the end of 2022.

Thailand PM will not step down: officials

Reuters

BANGKOK

Thailand's embattled Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin will not resign or dissolve Parliament, a senior official from the ruling Pheu Thai party said on Saturday.

A prolonged political crisis in Southeast Asia's second largest economy, perform her duty to resolve various crises that the country is facing," he said.

Pastongtarn, daughter of divorcee tycoon and former Premier Thaksin Shinawatra, is facing domestic anger over the leak of a phone call with Cambodia's former leader Hun Sen, in which she apparently confirmed to the veteran politician.

that she will continue to



Pastongtarn Shinawatra

UN urges for more foreign support to speed up Syria refugee returns

Agence France-Press

DAMASCUS

UN refugee agency chief Filippo Grandi has urged international support for Syria to speed up reconstruction and enable further refugee returns after some 14 years of civil war.

"I am here also to really make an appeal to the international community to provide more help, more assistance to the Syrian people in this big challenge of recovery of the country," Mr. Grandi told a press conference on Friday on the sidelines of a visit to Damascus.

Syrians who had been



UN refugee agency chief Filippo Grandi, left, with Syria's interim prime minister Assad al-Sharaa in Damascus on Friday. AP

displaced internally or fled abroad have begun gradually returning home since the President overthrew of longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad, whose brutal repression of peaceful anti-government protest

Nigeria suicide blast kills anti-Jihadists

Agence France-Press

KONDUGA

A suicide attack in Nigeria's Borno state by a woman allegedly acting for Boko Haram insurgents has killed at least 20 anti-jihadist fighters, militia members said on Saturday.

Police have confirmed 10 people were killed and said the overall toll could be higher.

Boko Haram and its rival, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), have in recent months intensified attacks on villages in Borno and neighbouring states. They have also overrun military bases, killing soldiers and carrying away weapons.

Late on Friday, a woman allegedly detonated explosives strapped to her

Police confirmed 10 people were killed and said the overall toll could be higher

body at a hunt for vigilantes and local hunters assisting the Nigerian military in fighting "jihadists" in the town of Konduga, the militia said.

"We lost 20 people in the suicide attack which happened yesterday around 9:45 p.m. (GMT) while our members were hanging out near the fish market," said Tijani Ahmad, the head of an anti-jihadist militia in Konduga district.

Konduga is about 40 km from Maiduguri, the capital of the northeastern state of Borno.

gin, including around 1.5 million internally displaced people, while some 5,000,000 others have come back from neighbouring countries including Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. "Two million of course is only a fraction of the very big number of Syrian refugees and displaced, but it is a very big figure," he said.

He said he discussed the importance of the sustainability of returns with Syria Foreign Minister Assad al-Sharaa, including ensuring "that people don't move again because they don't have a job" or other services such as health,



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Press Trust of India
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Nobel Prize Nomination & Selection Process

Stage	Details
1. Invitation for Nominations	Nobel committees send invitations to qualified nominators worldwide.
Who can nominate?	Depends on the category, generally includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Professors from relevant fields- National politicians (for Peace Prize)- Past Nobel laureates- Directors of recognized research institutes- Select international organizations (UN bodies, etc.)
Self-nomination	✗ Not allowed
2. Submission Deadline	January 31 of the award year.

3. Review by Nobel Committees	Committees for each Prize (Peace, Physics, Chemistry, etc.) review nominations.
4. Expert Reports	Independent experts may evaluate shortlisted candidates.
5. Committee Recommendation	The committee submits recommendations to the awarding body.
6. Final Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences: Physics, Chemistry, Economics- Karolinska Institute: Medicine- Norwegian Nobel Committee: Peace Prize- Swedish Academy: Literature
7. Announcement	October each year; Prize is announced publicly.
8. Award Ceremony	December 10 (death anniversary of Alfred Nobel) in Stockholm/Oslo.

All adults overweight in every 5th Indian household: Study

Pattern More Prevalent In South States, Urban Areas

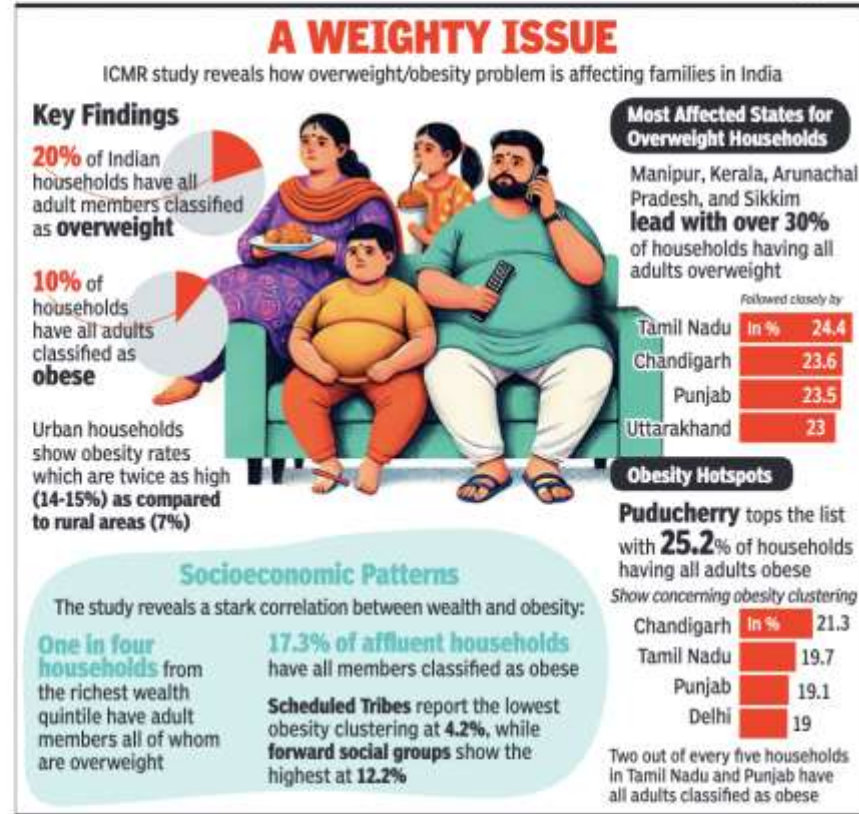
Durgesh Nandan Jha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: In nearly two out of 10 households, all adults are either overweight or obese, a new study has found.

Overweight is defined as a body weight higher than what is considered healthy for a given height, commonly assessed using Body Mass Index (BMI). A person is considered overweight if his or her BMI is between 25 and 29.9 kg/m². On the other hand, obesity is defined as a BMI of 30.0 kg/m² or greater.

Researchers from ICMR-National Institute for Cancer Prevention and Research (NICPR), TERI School of Advanced Studies and Symbiosis International analysed data from the fifth round of National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019-21) to assess the prevalence of overweight and obesity in over 6 lakh households. They found nearly 20% of the households had all adult members classified as overweight while 10% of households had all adults classified as obese.

In states such as Manipur, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, over 30% of households had all adults overweight, according to the study, which was published in Public Health Journal. In Tamil Na-



du and Punjab, two out of five households had all adults classified as obese. The proportion of households with all obese members was nearly twice as high in urban areas compared to rural regions.

The study reveals that families are literally 'gaining weight together'. When one family member is overweight or obese, others are significantly more likely to be obese/overweight as well, said the lead re-

searcher from ICMR-NICPR Prashant Kumar Singh. "This clustering pattern underscores the urgent need for family-centred approaches to obesity prevention rather than individual-focused interventions."

Director ICMR-NICPR Shalini Singh, said, "The household clustering of obesity and overweight represents a paradigm shift in how we understand obesity. This study tells us the family unit is the epicentre

of this health challenge."

The study warned that individuals in these family obesity clusters face heightened risk of developing multiple non-communicable diseases. It is already known that obesity serves as a marker for poor cardio-metabolic health and is known to be a gateway to numerous chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension, stroke, and heart failure. It is also linked to 13 types of cancer.

1. Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity

- Nearly **20%** of Indian households have all adult members classified as **overweight**.
- Around **10%** of households have all adults classified as **obese**.

Definition:

- Overweight: **BMI 25 to 29.9 kg/m²**.
- Obesity: **BMI \geq 30 kg/m²**.

2. Regional and Socio-economic Patterns

Most Affected States (Households with all adults overweight)

State/UT	% Households
Manipur, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim	Over 30%
Tamil Nadu	24.4%
Chandigarh	23.6%
Punjab	23.5%
Uttarakhand	23.0%

3. Obesity Hotspots (Households with all adults obese)

Place	% Households
Puducherry	25.2%
Chandigarh	21.3%
Tamil Nadu	19.7%
Punjab	19.1%
Delhi	19.0%

5. Socio-economic Factors

- **One in four households** from richest wealth quintile: all women overweight.
 - **17.3% of affluent households:** all members overweight.
 - **Scheduled Tribes:** Lowest obesity rates at **4.2%**.
 - **Forward Social Groups:** Higher rates at **12.2%**.
-

ICMR's Concern & Recommendations

- Family-level clustering of obesity indicates:
 - **Shared lifestyle habits.**
 - Increased risk of **non-communicable diseases (NCDs)** like:
 - Diabetes
 - Hypertension
 - Stroke
 - Heart failure
 - Certain cancers



1. ICMR

- Full Form: **Indian Council of Medical Research.**
- Apex body for biomedical research under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

2. BMI (Body Mass Index) Classification

Category	BMI Range (kg/m ²)
Underweight	< 18.5
Normal	18.5 - 24.9
Overweight	25 - 29.9
Obese	≥ 30

3. Obesity and NCDs

- India faces **dual burden**: undernutrition & obesity.
- Obesity contributes to:
 - **Cardiovascular diseases**
 - **Diabetes**
 - **13 types of cancers**
 - **Premature mortality**

NO PrEP IN GOVT CENTRES IN 12 YEARS

What's HIV

- HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) attacks the body's immune system
- Without treatment, it can lead to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome)
- There is currently no effective cure
- But **proper medical care can control the virus**

Prevention

- Using condoms
- Never sharing needles, syringes, or other drug injection equipment
- Using PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis that is given to healthcare workers exposed to the virus during surgery or caring for HIV-positive persons as well as to victims of sexual assault)

Transmission
Only certain body fluids can transmit HIV. These fluids include blood, semen, rectal fluids and vaginal fluids

Incidence

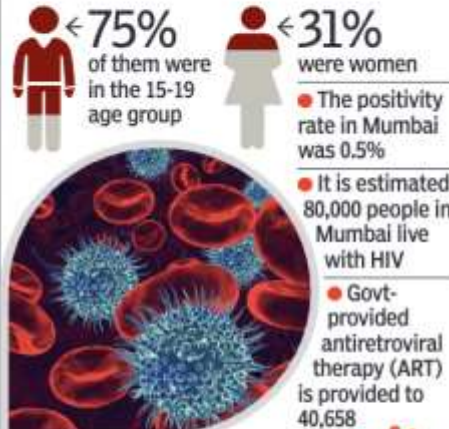
- India had an estimated **2.5 million** people living with HIV in 2023
- New HIV infections for India are estimated at around **66,400** annually
- In Maharashtra, **20,904** cases were reported between 2023 and 2024

What's new

- Two days back, the United States Food and Drug Administration approved long-acting injectable lenacapavir for HIV prevention
- It is administered by injection once every 6 months
- The pharma company, Gilead Sciences, has announced a US price of **\$28,218** per person per year

Mumbai cases

On Dec 1 2024, World AIDS Day, Mumbai District AIDS Control Society (MDACS) said 3,383 new cases were detected in Mumbai between 2023 and 2024



How does PrEP work

If enough PrEP is present in the body when a person is exposed to HIV, it is highly effective at preventing the virus from taking hold and establishing a lifelong infection

- A new **injectable HIV prevention drug, Lenacapavir**, promises **99.9% protection** against HIV.
- Recently approved by the **US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**.
- India will not have access soon due to:
 - High costs (~₹24 lakh or \$28,218 per person annually).
 - Lack of formal rollout of **Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)** by **NACO (National AIDS Control Organisation)**.

- **Q. Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is a preventive medical approach used for:**
 - a) Cancer
 - b) Malaria
 - c) HIV/AIDS
 - d) Diabetes

From 2026, Class 1 entry age to be raised to 6 in city schools

SOPHIYA MATHEW
NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

STARTING 2026, a child will need to be at least six years old to be admitted to Class 1 in a Delhi school—a change that could alter how pre-primary education is structured across the Capital.

In a circular issued on Friday, the Directorate of Education (DoE), Government of NCT Delhi, announced that the minimum age of admission to Class 1 will be raised to 6 from the academic year 2026–27.

This is in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which introduced the “5+3+3+4” model for school education and brought early childhood learning into the formal schooling system. This model divides schooling into four stages: foundational (5 years), preparatory (3 years), middle (3 years), and secondary (4 years).

“A child may be admitted to Class 1 only upon completion of 6 years of age from academic session 2026–27 onwards,” the circular stated, adding that “detailed directions regarding the implementation... will be shared with schools subsequently in due course of time.”

Following the introduction of the NEP 2020, the Union government has been urging governments across states and union territories, including Delhi, to implement the structure. Until now, Delhi was among the several states that allowed enrollment in Class 1 to children who were under six. The move is expected to bring long-term benefits, but may

EXPLAINED
E Why a late start is good

UNTIL NOW, Delhi schools allowed enrollment in Class 1 to children under the age of six. The fresh move is likely to bring a positive impact. Studies, such as those by Cambridge University, have found no long-term academic advantage in starting formal literacy instruction at age 5. Children who start later often show better comprehension and more positive attitudes towards learning.

cause some disruption in the short term as schools, parents, and early education providers adjust to the new structure.

What changes?

Delhi schools had so far been admitting students aged 3 and above in Nursery, 4 and above in KG, and 5 and above in Class 1.

With the latest change, parents will now have to plan for an additional year of preschool.

The foundational stage will now include three years of early education: Nursery (Bal Vatika 1) at age 3+, Lower KG (Bal Vatika 2) at 4+, and Upper KG (Bal Vatika 3) at 5+, as per the circular.

Only after completing this stage can a child progress to Class 1. Sudha Acharya, Principal, I.T.L. Public School, Dwarka, called the shift “a much-needed alignment

with developmental needs”.

She said, “It gives children more time to grow emotionally, socially, and cognitively before they are pushed into formal academics.” But Acharya also flagged the need for planning and detailed guidelines by the Delhi Education Department. “Parents need clarity. Schools, especially private ones, will need to prepare for an expanded pre-primary section—more classrooms, more trained teachers. Otherwise, the implementation could become chaotic.”

At present, many parents in the Capital send their children to private preschools or Anganwadis before enrolling them in schools. With the restructuring of the foundational stage, schools may see higher enrolments, especially among families that prefer a school-based structure from the start, as per educators.


“This move could lead to more parents enrolling children directly into schools for early learning, rather than Anganwadis, which are seen as less structured,” Acharya noted. If a child is currently under the age of 3, parents will need to plan preschool choices more carefully, as skipping this stage will no longer be an option for enrollment in Class 1.

To make the implementation process more “inclusive”, the DoE has invited suggestions from all stakeholders, said officials.

The change also brings Delhi in line with the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009, which guarantees free and compulsory education from age 6 to 14, as students will be enrolled in Class 1 only after 6 years of age, unlike before.

- From academic year **2026-27**, children must be at least **6 years old** to be admitted to **Class 1** in Delhi schools.
- The change aligns with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** and its **5+3+3+4 structure** for school education.

2. NEP 2020: Structural Framework

Stage	Duration	Age Group	
Foundational	5 years	3-8 years	
Preparatory	3 years	8-11 years	
Middle	3 years	11-14 years	
Secondary	4 years	14-18 years	

- The foundational stage includes:
 - **Nursery/Bal Vatika 1: Age 3+**
 - **Lower KG/Bal Vatika 2: Age 4+**
 - **Upper KG/Bal Vatika 3: Age 5+**
 - Class 1 admission follows completion of the foundational stage at **age 6+**.
-

3. Why a Late Start is Good

- Research (e.g., **Cambridge University studies**) shows:
 - No long-term academic advantage in starting formal learning at age 5.
 - Children starting at 6 show better comprehension and learning attitudes.
 - Allows time for emotional, social, and cognitive development.
-

- **Q. As per NEP 2020, the minimum age for admission to Class 1 is:**
 - a) 3 years
 - b) 4 years
 - c) 5 years
 - d) 6 years

JCB Prize for Literature, which put several Indian writers on international map, discontinued

TRISHA MUKHERJEE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

THE ANNUAL JCB Prize for Literature, the most expensive literary award — ₹25 lakh for the writer, ₹10 lakh for translator — in the country, has been stopped without any formal announcement.

The discontinuation of the award, which was last given to writer Upamanyu Chatterjee for *Lorenzo Searches for the Meaning of Life* in 2024, was confirmed by Mita Kapur, literary director, JCB Prize, on June 21, even as she refused to elaborate on the events that led to the decision. "The prize has been shut down. I am not going to deny something that is evident. But for everything else, 'no comment'," she said.

The decision was taken months after the cancellation of the JCB Literature Foundation's licence "issued to it under Section 8(5) of the Companies Act, 2013". According to a notice dated March 12 on the JCB Prize website, the foundation had sent an application to the Registrar of Companies, Delhi & Haryana, for revocation of the licence. "The company will be required to add the words 'Private Limited' to its name in place of 'Foundation'," the notice said. The literary award was given by the 'Foundation', which was established with the purpose of promoting "the art

of literature in India".

Established in 2018, the JCB Prize for Literature was a pioneer in celebrating Indian fiction, particularly translations. Of the seven editions, the award went to works of translations five times — *Jasmine Days* by Benyamin in 2018, translated from Malayalam by Shahnaz Habib; *Moustache* by S Hareesh in 2020, translated from Malayalam by Jayasree Kalathil; *Delhi: A Soliloquy* by M Mukundan in 2021, translated from Malayalam by Fathima EV and Nandakumar K; *The Paradise of Food* in 2022 by Khalid Jawed, translated from Urdu by Baran Farooqi, and *Fire Bird* by Perumal Murugan in 2023, translated from Tamil by Janani Kannan. The 2019 award went to Madhuri Vijay for *The Far Field*.

Murugan, who waited half a decade before winning the prize — he was on the JCB shortlist in 2018 for *Poonachi* and in 2019 for *A Lonely Harvest* and *Trial by Silence* — said he was saddened by the news. "It is sad for Indian literature, especially in Indian languages. The JCB Prize celebrated Indian languages and awarded works of translations. It was a huge award... They clearly considered Indian languages important. Malayalam works have won twice and Tamil and Urdu once," said the writer.

Mukundan said he was hoping that it be a hoax. "Thanks to the JCB Prize for Literature, re-

gional writers were able to transcend the borders of languages," he said. "Earlier, we were only regional writers. The award made us Indian writers... Before it, those writing in regional languages were sidelined. Only those writing in English were considered Indian. Salman Rushdie's anthology of Indian writing ('Mirrorwork: 50 Years of Indian Writing, 1947-1997'; published in 1997) did not have a single regional name," said Mukundan.

Jawed, the 2022 winner of the prize and a professor of Urdu at Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia, has urged for a review of the discontinuation decision.

"It's been one of the highlights of the year ever since it was set up and having a book on the list was something we celebrated. Both Rana (Dasgupta, founding literary director of the prize) and Mita brought so much thought and planning to it year after year, assembling excellent juries and driving publicity for the books," said Karthika V K of Westland that published Mukundan's 2021 winning entry under the imprint Eka.

"The award inspired better writing in regional languages and we had something to look forward to every year. Now we will be back to being regional writers," rued Mukundan.

- The **JCB Prize for Literature**, India's most expensive literary award, has been discontinued.
 - Last awarded in **2024** to **Upamanyu Chatterjee** for *Lorenzo Searches for the Meaning of Life*.
 - Prize Money:
 - ₹25 lakh for the writer.
 - ₹10 lakh for the translator.
-

2. Reasons for Discontinuation

- No formal explanation provided by JCB Prize literary director **Mita Kapur**.
- Follows cancellation of the **JCB Literature Foundation's licence** under Section 8(5) of the **Companies Act, 2013**.
- Foundation was required to add the words "**Private Limited**" to its name, marking a shift in its legal status.

3. About the JCB Prize for Literature

- Established: 2018.
- Aimed to promote Indian fiction, especially translations.
- Elevated regional language writers onto global platforms.
- Encouraged literary diversity beyond English writing.

4. Notable Past Winners

Year	Work & Author	Language
2018	<i>Jasmine Days</i> by Benyamin (translated by Shahnaz Habib)	Malayalam
2019	<i>The Far Field</i> by Madhuri Vijay	English

2021

Delhi: A Soliloquy by M. Mukundan (translated by
Fathima EV & Nandakumar K)

Malayalam

2022

The Paradise of Food by Khalid Jawed (translated by
Baran Farooqi)

Urdu

2023

Fire Bird by Perumal Murugan (translated by Janani
Kannan)

Tamil

2024

Lorenzo Searches for the Meaning of Life by
Upamanyu Chatterjee

English

- **Q. The JCB Prize for Literature primarily focused on promoting:**
 - a) Indian Science Fiction
 - b) Indian Non-Fiction Writing
 - c) Indian Fiction, especially translations
 - d) English-language poetry in India

What drives students to coaching centres? Govt panel to investigate

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 21

THE MINISTRY of Education has constituted a committee that will discuss issues related to coaching and suggest measures to reduce students' "dependency" on coaching centres. The panel will examine the "effectiveness and fairness of competitive entrance examinations" and their influence on the growth of the coaching industry.

The nine-member committee headed by Vineet Joshi, Secretary, Department of Higher Education, will examine gaps in the schooling system "that contribute to students' reliance on coaching centres, particularly the limited focus on critical thinking, logical reasoning, analytical skills, and innova-

tion, and the prevalence of rote learning practices," according to an order issued by the ministry on June 17.

It will also look into the reasons behind the emergence of 'dummy schools', and suggest ways to mitigate them, along with assessing awareness levels among parents and students on different career pathways.

The committee will include the chairman of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), representatives of IIT Madras, IIT Kanpur, NIT Trichy and National Council of Educational Research and Training, and a principal each from a Kendriya Vidyalaya, a Navodaya Vidyalaya, and a private school.

The committee is expected to brief the education minister on its

progress every month. It is also expected to look into the demand for quality higher education, the limited availability of seats in premier institutions, and "how this imbalance drives students towards coaching institutes". It will review the advertising practices of coaching centres, including the promotion of selective success stories and misleading claims.

Last year, the Centre had issued guidelines to states on regulating coaching centres in India. The guidelines recommended that students younger than 16 years should not be enrolled in coaching centres, and that centres should not make misleading promises or guarantee ranks to students and parents. It had also suggested the registration of coaching centres.

- **Ministry of Education** has constituted a **9-member committee** to investigate:
 - Growing reliance on coaching centres.
 - Gaps in the schooling system contributing to this trend.
 - Effectiveness and fairness of **competitive entrance exams**.
-

2. Committee Composition

- Headed by **Vineet Joshi**, Secretary, Department of Higher Education.
- Includes:
 - Chairman of **CBSE**.
 - Representatives from:
 - **IIT Madras, IIT Kanpur, NIT Trichy**.
 - **NCERT** (National Council of Educational Research and Training).
 - A **Kendriya Vidyalaya**, a **Navodaya Vidyalaya**, and a **private school** principal.

3. Key Focus Areas

- Gaps in schooling:
 - Limited emphasis on **critical thinking, logical reasoning, analytical skills, innovation.**
 - Prevalence of **rote learning practices.**
- Reasons behind:
 - The rise of **dummy schools.**
 - Growing demand for quality higher education.
 - Seat scarcity in premier institutions.
- Review of:
 - **Coaching industry advertisements,** misleading claims, selective success stories.
 - Awareness levels among parents and students regarding career pathways.

- **Q. As per the recent Centre guidelines, students below which age should not be enrolled in coaching centres?**
 - a) 14 years
 - b) 15 years
 - c) 16 years
 - d) 18 years

B-2s FLEW EAST UNDETECTED FOR 18 HRS, REFUELLED MID-AIR



HOW IT UNFOLDED

(in US Eastern Time, 9 hours and 30 minutes behind IST)

12:01 AM - B-2s depart Whiteman Air Force Base

5:00 PM - Maritime launch, B-2s join support package

6:00 PM - Bombers enter Iran

6:40-7:00 PM - Nuclear targets struck

7:30 PM - Bombers exit

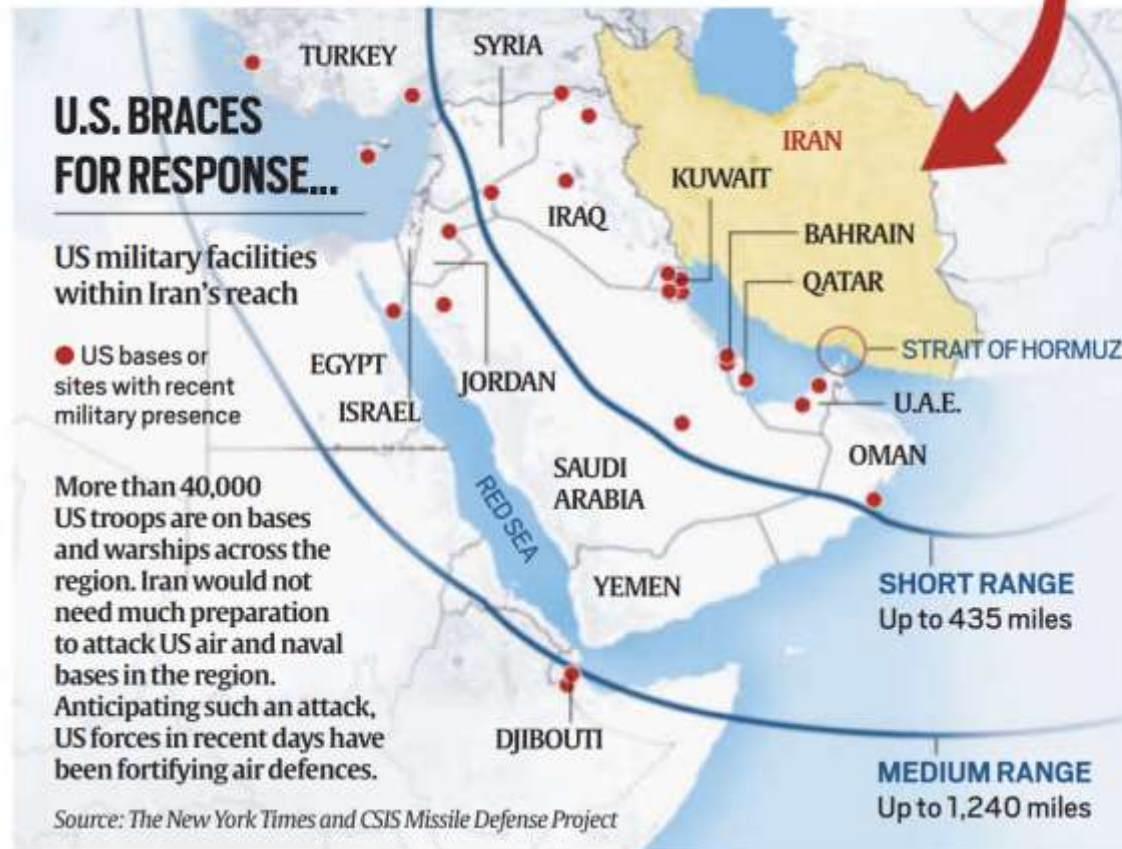
U.S. BRACES FOR RESPONSE...

US military facilities within Iran's reach

● US bases or sites with recent military presence

More than 40,000 US troops are on bases and warships across the region. Iran would not need much preparation to attack US air and naval bases in the region. Anticipating such an attack, US forces in recent days have been fortifying air defences.

Source: The New York Times and CSIS Missile Defense Project



... AS IRAN WEIGHS ACTION

■ Iran has threatened to strike at US bases and blow up naval mines in the Persian Gulf.

■ A more realistic threat is to close the **Strait of Hormuz** via which **20%** of the global oil and gas demand flows. But such a move will also affect Iran.

■ With Hezbollah of Lebanon and Hamas of Gaza significantly weakened, Iran's last key allies are the Houthis. The Yemen-based group has a ceasefire deal with the US but has threatened to hit US ships in the **Red Sea**.

Trump's gambit

The White House says the combination of strikes 'completely and fully obliterated' three nuclear sites in Iran

☀ **Fordow:** Iran's most heavily fortified nuclear site used for uranium enrichment, which is built deep beneath a mountain

☀ **Natanz:** Largest uranium enrichment facility in Iran

☀ **Isfahan:** Iran's largest nuclear research site, which was targeted by Israel 2 times since the crisis began on June 13

B-2 Spirit Stealth bomber

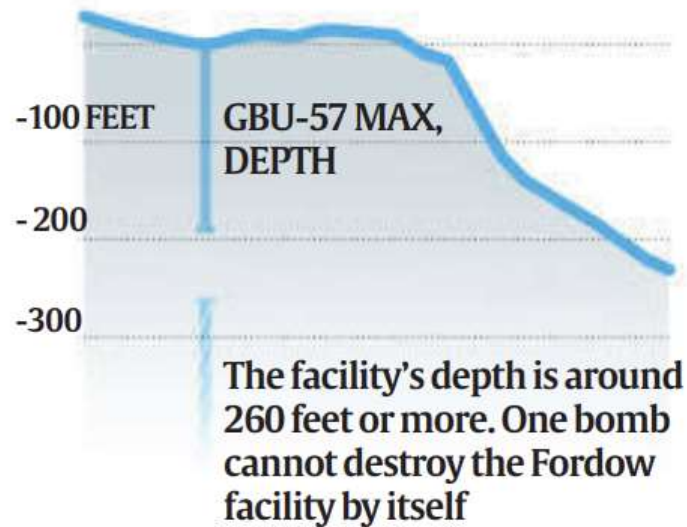


War plans: U.S. President Donald Trump and Cabinet members in the White House on Saturday night. AFP

SOURCE: GRAPHIC NEWS

CROSS-SECTION OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGE THAT ENCASES FORDOW

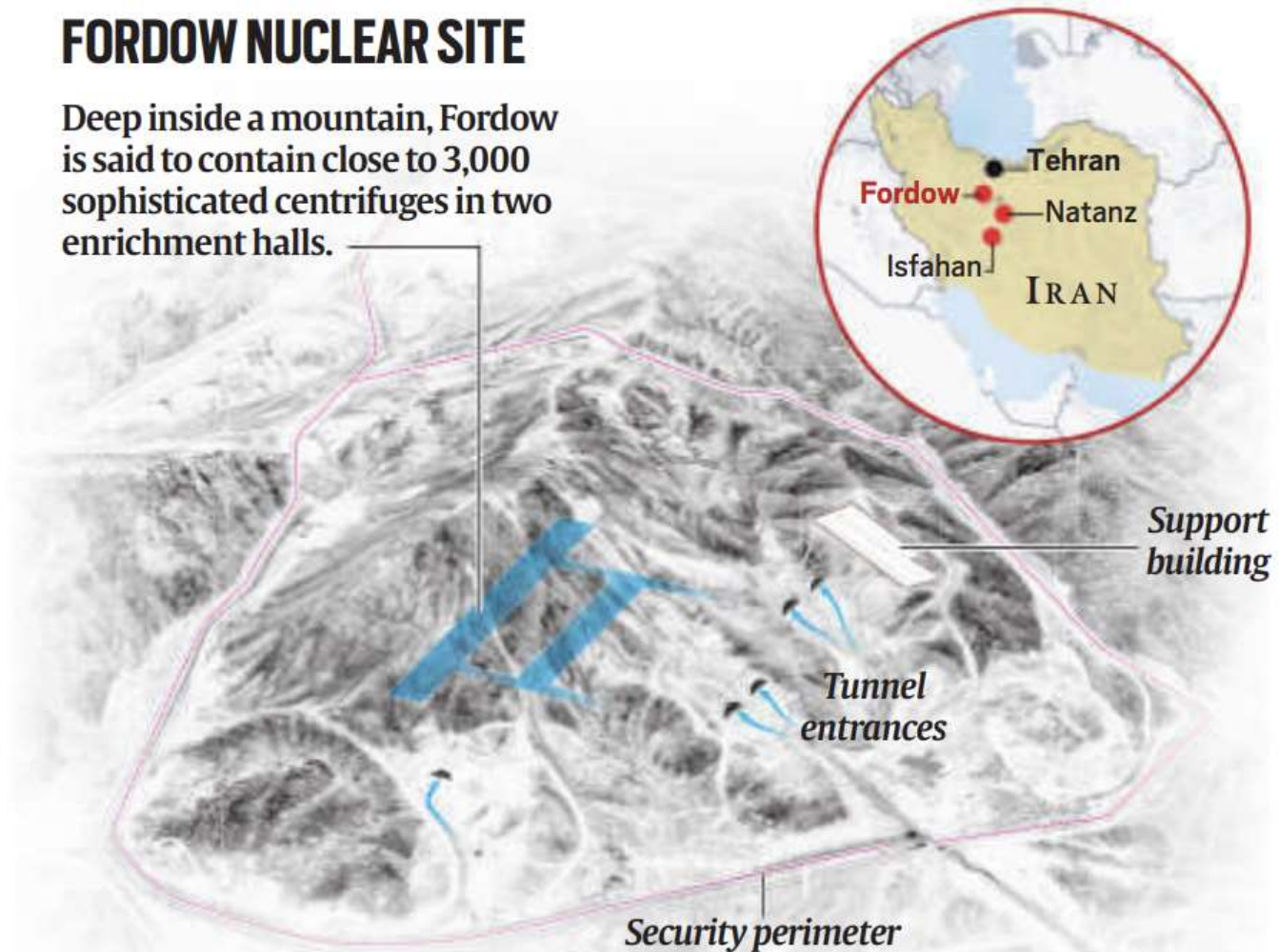
The peak of the mountain is 3,150 feet above sea level



Sources: Congressional Research Service (bomb capabilities); Center for Strategic and international Studies, Institute for Science and International Security (minimum depth of facility)/ The New York Times

FORDOW NUCLEAR SITE

Deep inside a mountain, Fordow is said to contain close to 3,000 sophisticated centrifuges in two enrichment halls.




Sources: Nuclear Threat Initiative; Google Earth (terrain)/ The NYT

- The US escalated involvement in Israel-Iran conflict by:
 - Dropping **30,000-pound bunker-buster bombs** on Iran's **Fordow uranium enrichment site** buried under a mountain.
 - Launching more than **two dozen Tomahawk missiles** at Iran's nuclear facilities.
- US President **Donald Trump** declared the strikes "completely and fully obliterated" three key Iranian nuclear sites:
 - **Fordow**
 - **Natanz**
 - **Isfahan**



2. Details of Targeted Sites

Site	Significance
Fordow	Iran's most heavily fortified nuclear site; underground uranium enrichment facility.
Natanz	Largest uranium enrichment facility in Iran.
Isfahan	Iran's largest nuclear research site; previously targeted by Israel twice.



Location/Term	Importance
Strait of Hormuz	Key global oil shipping route between Iran and Oman.
B-2 Spirit Stealth Bomber	US long-range bomber used for penetrating fortified sites.
GBU-57 MOP ('Bunker-Buster')	14 of these massive bombs used on Iranian sites.
Tomahawk Missile	US long-range, precision cruise missile.

- Hours after U.S. airstrikes on three Iranian nuclear sites, **Iran launched over 40 missiles toward Israel** on Sunday.
- The missile strikes:
 - Wounded at least **23 people**.
 - Destroyed apartment buildings and homes in **Tel Aviv** and two other cities.
- At one Tel Aviv site:
 - The blast sheared off the face of a multi-storey residential building.
 - A nursing home nearby also suffered damage.
 - Most residents evacuated to bomb shelters; casualties were limited.

Prompting fears of a wider regional conflict, the United States inserted itself into Israel's war against Iran early on Sunday by dropping 30,000-pound bombs on a uranium enrichment site buried under a mountain, a risky gambit that aimed at destroying the Islamic Republic's nuclear programme after months of failed diplomacy.

The U.S. also fired dozens of missiles, and President Donald Trump said that the combination of strikes "completely and fully obliterated" three nuclear sites. However, U.S. defence officials said an assessment of the damage was ongoing.

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran confirmed that attacks took place on the Fordow and Natanz enrichment facilities as well as its Isfahan nuclear site, but it insisted that its nuclear programme will not be stopped. Both Iran and the UN nuclear watchdog said



War plans: U.S. President Donald Trump and Cabinet members in the White House on Saturday night. AFP

there were no immediate signs of radioactive contamination following the strikes.

U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said the country does not "seek war" and that the operation would not be "open-ended", though Mr. Trump earlier warned there would be additional strikes

if Tehran retaliated. "There will either be peace or there will be tragedy for Iran," said Mr. Trump, who acted without congressional authorisation. Vice-President J.D. Vance, however, said the strikes have given Tehran the possibility of returning to negotiate with Washington.

Hours later, Iranian Fo-

rein Minister Abbas Araghchi said the attacks have crossed a 'big red line' adding that the time for diplomacy had passed and that his country had the right to defend itself. Mr. Araghchi said he would be flying to Moscow to coordinate positions with its ally, Russia. "The war-mongering and lawless ad-

ministration in Washington is solely and fully responsible for the dangerous consequences and far-reaching implications of its act of aggression," he told presspersons in Türkiye.


EDITORIAL

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MORE REPORTS ON

» PAGES 5 & 14

2. The GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP)

Parameter	Details	
Weight	13.6 tonnes (30,000 pounds)	
Length	~20.5 feet	
Diameter	~31.5 inches	
Primary Use	Destroying deeply buried and hardened facilities (e.g., underground nuclear sites).	
Penetration Capability	Burrows up to 60 metres underground before exploding.	
Material	Special high-performance steel alloy.	
Development	By U.S. Air Force Research Lab & Boeing.	
First Tested	2007	
Notable Deployment	At least 20 bunker busters delivered to USAF.	

3. The Bomb Carrier: B-2 Spirit Stealth Bomber

Feature	Details
Aircraft Type	Strategic stealth bomber
Operational Since	1989
Fleet Size	19 operational B-2s in USAF
Combat Radius	~9,600 km; can exceed 19,000 km with aerial refueling.
Notable Missions	Kosovo War (1999), Iraq (2003), Afghanistan, Libya, Yemen.
Stealth Capabilities	Evades radar through advanced coating, composite materials, low infrared signature.
Payload for MOP	Can carry and deploy two GBU-57 bombs.
Cost per Aircraft	Estimated at \$1.2 billion each.

4. Weakened Iran

- Israel claims to have destroyed ~1/3rd of Iran's missile capabilities.
 - Iran's regional influence has already weakened due to:
 - Economic sanctions.
 - Israeli strikes on Palestinian groups (**Hamas, Hezbollah**) backed by Iran.
 - Iranian military weakened; some top military officials reportedly killed.
-

5. Costs for India and the World

a) Energy & Economic Impact

- Any Iranian retaliation in the **Persian Gulf** could disrupt:
 - Oil supplies from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Qatar.
 - Maritime trade through the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- Global oil prices may rise sharply.
- Almost **60% of India's energy needs** met from the region.

b) Security & Geopolitical Impact

- Escalating tensions increase:
 - Regional instability.
 - Risks to Indian diaspora (approx. 8-9 million Indians in Middle East).
 - Threats to key projects like **IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor)**.

IRAQ

IRAN

**PERSIAN
GULF**

**STRAIT OF
HORMUZ**

**SAUDI
ARABIA**

UAE

OMAN

**ARABIAN
SEA**



2. Why Strait of Hormuz Matters

Aspect	Details
Location	Between Iran and Oman, connecting Persian Gulf to Arabian Sea.
Significance	World's most critical oil trade chokepoint.
Volume of Oil Trade	~17% of global oil passes through the Strait.
LNG Trade	Major route for liquefied natural gas exports, especially from Qatar.
India's Oil Dependency	~44% of Indian oil imports pass through the Strait.

3. Energy Market Implications

- Closure risks disrupting:
 - Global oil and LNG supply.
 - Prices of crude oil and natural gas.
- Benchmark Brent crude price already rose to **\$77 per barrel**, expected to rise further.
- Closure could:
 - Push oil prices beyond **\$150-200 per barrel**.
 - Spark inflation and economic slowdown globally.
- Countries most affected:
 - India, China, Japan, South Korea.
 - Major oil-importing European nations.

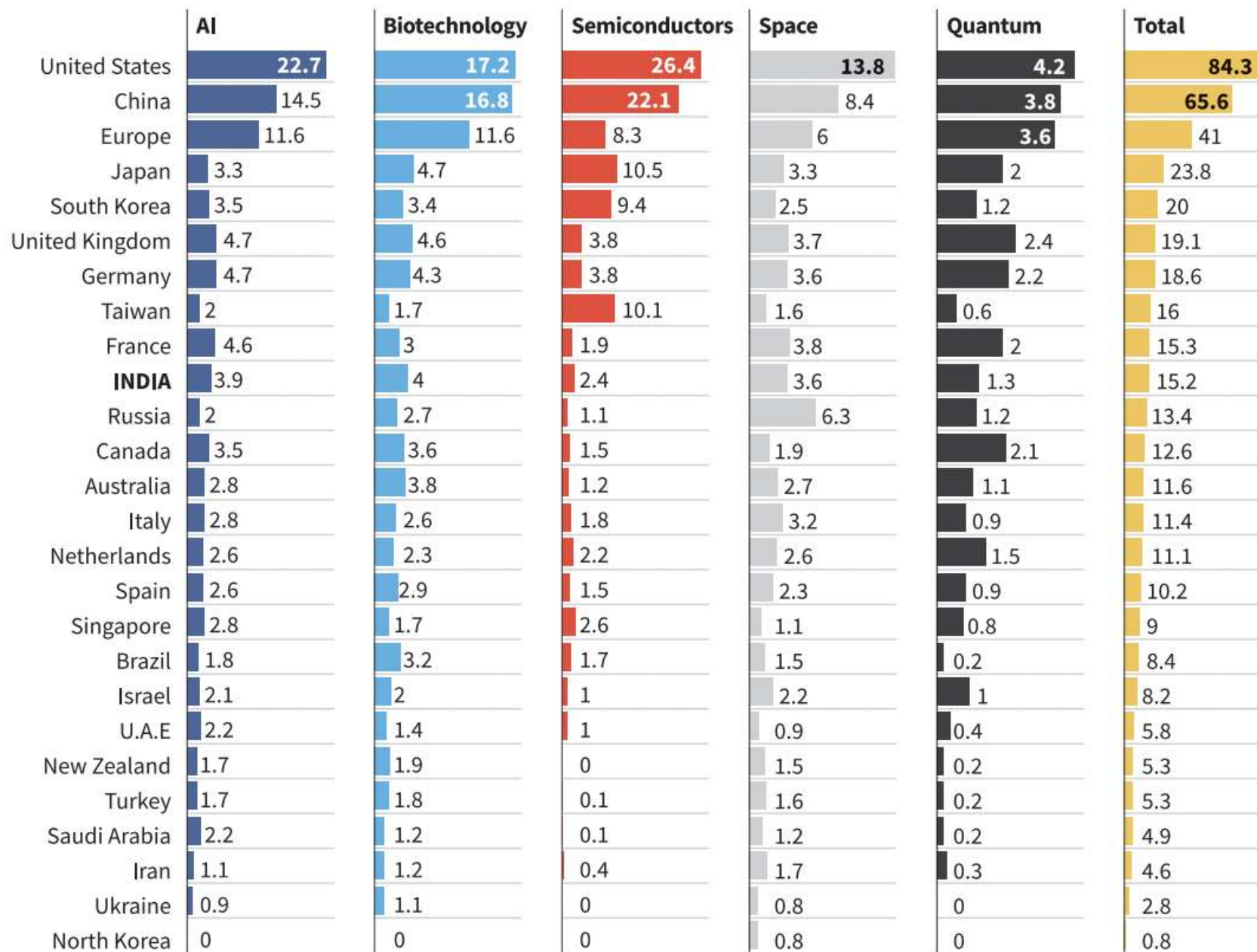
Assessing the global tech race

The data for the chart was sourced from the 'Critical and Emerging Technologies Index' published by the Harvard Kennedy School - Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs



CHART 1: The chart assesses the national power of countries across key technology sectors such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Biotechnology, Semiconductors, Space, and Quantum

CHART 1: The chart assesses the national power of countries across key technology sectors such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Biotechnology, Semiconductors, Space, and Quantum



- 
- A new **Critical and Emerging Technologies Index** assesses 25 countries across five key tech sectors:
 - Artificial Intelligence (AI)
 - Biotechnology
 - Semiconductors
 - Space
 - Quantum Technologies
 - **India** lags significantly behind **U.S., China, and Europe**, with an overall score of **15.2**, positioned below France but ahead of Russia, Canada, and Australia.
- 

2. Sector-wise Importance & Weightage

Sector	Weightage (%)	Key Considerations
Semiconductors	35%	Geopolitical relevance, dual-use potential
AI	25%	Algorithms, computing power, funding, talent
Biotechnology	20%	Human capital, pharma, genetic engineering
Space	15%	Defence assets, navigation, telecom
Quantum	5%	Funding, talent, core technologies

3. Global Performance Overview

Rank	Region/Country	Strengths
1	United States	AI, semiconductors, space dominance
2	China	Closing gap in biotech, quantum; lags in semiconductors
3	Europe	Strong in biotech, quantum; weak in semiconductors, space
-	Taiwan, Japan, South Korea	High semiconductor rankings
-	Russia	3rd in space indicator
-	India	7th in space; behind in most tech sectors

4. India's Position

- Performs relatively better in space sector (**7th rank**).
 - Lags in:
 - AI due to weaker private research ecosystem.
 - Semiconductors due to lack of chip design and manufacturing capabilities.
 - Biotechnology and quantum compared to global leaders.
-

5. Factors Behind US Dominance

- Deep investments.
- Strong research workforce.
- Decentralised innovation ecosystem spanning government, academia, and industry.

Number of international travellers to Europe last year

747

In million persons. Europe has been called the world's museum, but its record number of visitors have raised concerns about overtourism. Last year, 747 million international travellers visited, outnumbering any other region in the world, as per UN's World Tourism Barometer. PTI

- 
- Europe experienced a record **747 million international travellers** last year.
 - Southern and Western Europe welcomed over **70%** of these visitors.
 - Concerns are rising over:
 - Housing shortages.
 - Pressure on local infrastructure (water, energy, transport).
 - Cultural backlash from local residents.
- 

2. Causes of Overtourism

- Cheap flights.
- Influence of social media.
- AI-based ease of travel planning.
- Strong economic conditions in countries like:
 - U.S., Japan, China, U.K.
- Seasonal tourism creating uneven demand in hotspots like:
 - **Barcelona (Spain).**
 - **Venice (Italy).**
 - **Florence's Uffizi Galleries (Italy).**

3. Notable Impacts

Region/City/Island	Impact/Response
Spain (Canary & Balearic Islands)	15 million visitors; strain on housing, water.
Barcelona	Anti-tourism protests; plans to phase out 10,000 Airbnb rentals by 2028.
France	100 million international visitors; housing issues.
Greece (Islands)	€20 cruise tax on popular islands from July 1; €5 on less-visited ones.

4. Local Backlash

- Protests across Spain, especially Barcelona.
 - Water gun protests targeting tourists with slogans like:
 - "One more tourist, one less resident!"
 - Regulations on Airbnb and short-term rentals.
-

5. Policy Suggestions & Responses

- Better management of ticketing at crowded sites using AI (Italy's proposal).
- Crackdown on illegal short-term rentals.
- Cruise taxes to regulate tourist flows.
- Encouraging visitors to choose **less popular locations**.

- **Q. The Balearic Islands, often seen in the news, are located in which water body?**
 - a) Atlantic Ocean
 - b) Black Sea
 - c) Mediterranean Sea
 - d) Baltic Sea

Word of the day

Sollicitous:

full of anxiety and concern; showing hovering attentiveness

Usage: *She made solicitous inquiries about our family.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/sollicitouspro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /sə'lisɪtəs/

Class24 के साथ,
सफलता आपके हाथ....

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FOUNDATION
BATCH
Starts

Pre. + Mains CGL • CHSL • CPO • MTS

25 June, 2025
@ 08:00 AM

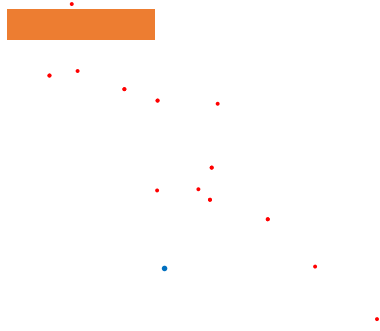


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Thank you
guys.

