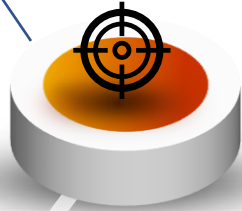


# Daily Current Affairs





3  
**The Hindu**



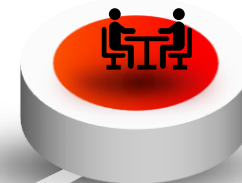
2  
**PIB, PRS & Other  
newspaper**



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“If you can make a woman laugh, you can make her do anything.”

— Marilyn Monroe





**SEARCH ON**  
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of the Godavari in A.P.  
STATES » PAGE 3

## Washed ashore



**Cargo adrift:** Containers from the Liberian-flagged cargo ship that sank off the Kochi coast washed ashore near Kollam on Monday. The incident has raised concern about a possible oil spill and ecological damage along Kerala's coast. C. SURESHKUMAR (REPORT ON PAGE 3)

## INSIDE



## Gaurav Gogoi is Congress Assam unit president

**GUWAHATI**  
The All India Congress Committee on Monday appointed Jorhat MP Gaurav Gogoi as the president of the party's Assam unit. He replaces Bhupen Kumar Borah, who helmed the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee for almost four years. » **PAGE 2**



## SC Collegium picks 3 judges for top court

**NEW DELHI**  
The Supreme Court Collegium on Monday recommended the names of the Chief Justices of two HC and a judge of the Bombay HC for elevation to the SC. The working strength of the Supreme Court Bench has been reduced to 31 with the retirement of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and A.S. Okar. » **PAGE 4**



## India reports 1,009 active COVID-19 cases

**NEW DELHI**  
India on Monday reported 1,009 active COVID-19 cases in the country, with Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra reporting a spike in cases. The number stood at 257 on May 19. According to the Health Ministry, COVID-19 cases in NB, LB, and LF were found in India recently. » **PAGE 6**

## Bharat Forecast System set to give sharper rain alerts

**Jacob Koshli**  
NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday adopted the Bharat Forecast System (BFS), which promises more fine-tuned and accurate rain forecasts down to the panchayat level. The improvements will largely be visible in the "short- and medium-term" forecasts (three- and seven-day lead time) issued by the IMD but not in the long-range forecasts, usually given a month in advance.

The BFS, developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), has been tested since 2002 and has shown operational improvements. In giving advance warning of heavy rainfall events, M. Ravichandran, Director-General, IMD, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said. The improvement in the forecasts is due to the IITM significantly improving the existing weather forecast models as well as harnessing more powerful computing capabilities. For analysis, the current weather forecast models

## Precision technology

The BFS developed by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, aims at improving weather forecast models.

**EXISTING FORECAST MODELS**  
■ Use square grids of 12-km sides to map a region  
■ Use equal-sized grids to map regions  
■ Able to give block-level forecasts 3 days ahead

**BFS MODEL**  
■ Breaks down a region into 1-km sides for mapping, leading to a four-fold improvement  
■ Uses a triangular-cubic octahedral structure  
■ Able to give forecasts up to the level of panchayats

cut up the globe into grid-sized squares of 12 km sides; the newer BFS model breaks it down into four-fold improvement. "India is the only country that will now provide operational weather forecasts at a 6 km by 6 km resolution," said M. Mohapatra, Director-General, IMD, official said. Another major change, said Mr. Ravichandran, was using a new 'grid structure'.

"The new grid-structure called the triangular-cubic octahedral generates more grids, and therefore higher resolution, over the tropical regions than the poles. As weather here is more volatile, this is more important for our forecast purposes," he said.

## Bangladesh Army at odds with govt. on Myanmar corridor

Armed forces will not compromise on issues related to the corridor, national security, and national sovereignty, says Army spokesperson

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

**T**he armed forces of Bangladesh will not be party to decisions that may harm the country's national security, a spokesperson of the Bangladesh Army said on Monday.

Speaking at a press briefing in Dhaka, Lt. Col. Shafigul Islam hinted at divergence with the interim government's initiatives to start a humanitarian corridor to Myanmar's Rakhine province, home to the persecuted Rohingya Muslims, and said that the Army will "not compromise" on the matter.

"The army will not compromise on issues related to the corridor, national security, and national sovereignty. After August 5, the Army has coordinated with everyone for the sake of the country," he said.

Army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman had taken crucial decisions without consulting the armed forces of Bangladesh.

After August 5, the Army has coordinated with everyone for the sake of the country," he said.

## "No compromise"

Key points made by Bangladesh Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Shafigul Islam on Monday

■ After August 5, the Army has coordinated with everyone for the sake of the country  
■ Stern action will be taken if anyone attempts to organise mobs  
■ Army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman had taken crucial decisions without consulting the armed forces of Bangladesh

**Apart from the armed forces, the idea of the corridor with Rakhine has evoked strong criticism from multiple stakeholders, including parties**

that was being planned to connect Chittagong with the rest of the country, Myanmar amidst apprehensions that the corridor might turn into a security challenge as it would entail partnering with non-state actors such as the Arakan Army in a region that is noted for arms and drugs smuggling.

General Zaman had said that the interim government had taken crucial decisions without consulting the armed forces of Bangladesh. The National Security Adviser to the interim government, Khalidur Rahman, on May 21 had said that the interim government was "not under pressure" from the U.S. or China for the creation of the corridor but has discussed it with the United Nations.

"The UN Secretary-General inquired about Bangladesh's ability to provide support to Rakhine. Bangladesh has informed the Arakan

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## Kings seal Qualifier 1 berth with big win

**SPORT » PAGE 16**

## India pushing back 'illegal' immigrants to Bangladesh

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

As many as 160 undocumented people from Bangladesh were flown on an Indian Air Force (IAF) plane from the NCR to Tripura on Sunday to be sent across to the neighbouring country, a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

The special flight took off from Gurgaon in Uttar Pradesh and landed at the Agartala airport on Sunday. The immigrants included women and children who were detained by the Delhi Police from outer Delhi last week during a drive to identify illegal immigrants.

The official said that the transportation is in line with the government's decision to send the undocumented immigrants to Bangladesh rather than wait for the deportation process which is "lengthy".

Earlier, on May 4, two Air India planes transported 300 undocumented people, including 200 women and children, who were earlier detained in Gujarat, to Agartala and subsequently sent to Bangladesh via the land border.

Following the Pahaligan terror attack on April 22, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs asked the States to intensify the drive against undocumented migrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar. *The Hindu* reported on May 14 that the government was sending the migrants across the Bangladesh border for over the past one month. Over 500 migrants have been sent across the eastern border so far. On May 17, around 140 undocumented migrants from Rajasthan were flown to Agartala and sent to Bangladesh.

The detainees are different from the Bangladeshis who either overstayed their visas or who entered the country illegally.

## Cong. stand on statement 'untruthful': Jaishankar

**Sobhana K. Nair**  
Sandeep Phukan  
NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Monday said that the Congress took an "untruthful" stand about his statement on the Operation Sindoor.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had accused the Centre of informing Pakistan "at the start" of the military action in Kashmir, saying it was "a crime". He had also posted on X a video of Mr. Jaishankar's remarks to media persons.

**FULL REPORT**  
» **PAGE 5**

## Ukraine targeted in Russia's biggest drone attack yet

**Associated Press**  
KYIV

Russia overnight launched the biggest drone attack on Ukraine in the more than three-year war, a Ukrainian official said on Monday. US President Donald Trump said Russian leader Vladimir Putin has gone "crazy" by stepping up the bombing of Ukraine just as the U.S. tries to broker a peace.

The Russian bombardment on Sunday night included 355 drones, said Vladimir Zelenskyy, head of the Ukrainian air force's communications. The previous night, Russia fired 298 drones and 69 missiles of various types at Ukraine in what Ukrainians called the largest and most combined aerial assault during the conflict. From Friday

to Sunday, Russia launched around 900 drones at Ukraine, officials said.

**'Putin has gone crazy'**  
Mr. Trump made it clear he is losing patience with Mr. Putin. "I've always had a very good relationship with Vladimir Putin of Russia, but something has happened to him. He has gone absolutely CRAZY!" Mr. Trump wrote in a social media post on Sunday night.

He said Mr. Putin is "needlessly killing a lot of people," pointing out that "missiles and drones are being shot into cities in Ukraine, for no reason whatsoever."



**No let-up:** The fire at a private enterprise facility following a Russian strike in Ukraine, likely related to the Operation Sindoor.

as Mr. Putin looks determined to capture more Ukrainian territory and inflict more damage. Russia has this month broken its record for aerial bombardments of Ukraine three times.

The expansion of its air campaign came after Kyiv in March accepted an un-

derstanding that there is considerable political meaning."

He repeated his call for tighter international economic sanctions on Russia as a way of ending the war, because Russia's "desire to fight must be deprived of resources."

The European Union's top diplomat, foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, on Monday described the latest attacks on Kyiv "as totally appalling" and said the bloc intended to impose more sanctions on Russia.

**'Emotional reactions'**  
The necessary to ensure Russia's security and that the attacks were Moscow's response to deep strikes by Ukraine.

Russia is grateful for American efforts to bring peace, which have included the countries' first direct peace talks in three years, Mr. Peskov said.

He said negotiations are at "a decisive moment that is linked to emotional overloading for everyone and emotional reactions."

The Ukrainian numbers for how many drones and missiles were fired could not be independently verified.

# Bharat Forecast System set to give sharper rain alerts

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday adopted the Bharat Forecast System (BFS), which promises more fine-tuned and accurate rain forecasts down to the panchayat level. The improvements will largely be visible in the “short- and medium-term” forecasts (three- and seven-day lead time) issued by the IMD but not in the long-range forecasts, usually given a month in advance.

The BFS, developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), has been tested since 2002 and has shown “notable improvements” in giving advance warning of heavy rainfall events, M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said. The improvement in the forecasts is due to the IITM significantly improving the existing weather forecast models as well as harnessing more powerful computing capabilities. For analysis, the current weather forecast models

## Precision technology

The BFS developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, aims at improving weather forecast models

### EXISTING FORECAST MODELS

- Use square grids of 12-km sides to map a region
- Use equal-sized grids to map regions
- Able to give block-level forecasts 5 days ahead



### BFS MODEL

- Breaks down a region into 6-km sides for mapping, leading to a four-fold improvement
- Uses a triangular-cubic octahedral structure
- Able to give forecasts up to the level of panchayats

cut up the globe into grid-ded squares of 12-km sides; the newer BFS model breaks it down into 6-km sides – leading to a four-fold improvement.

“India is the only country that will now provide operational weather forecasts at a 6 km by 6 km resolution,” said M. Mohapatra, Director-General, IMD.

However, the new system would not yet be able to significantly improve forecasts of phenomena like sudden, severe thunderstorms. “We have different models for that. We are in the process of installing 34 Doppler Weather Radars, in the coming year,” Mr.

Mohapatra added.

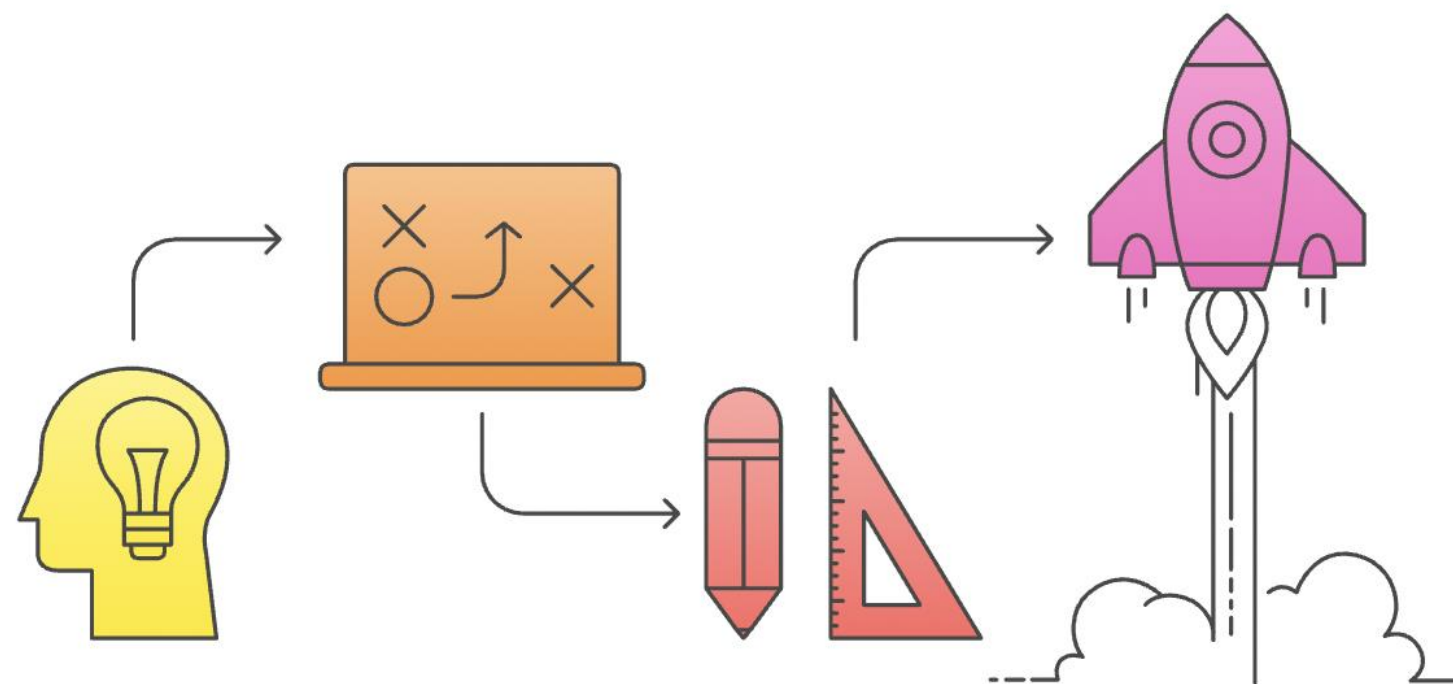
“Until now we have been able to give block-level forecasts five days ahead; now we can give up to the level of a panchayat, or a few villages,” the IMD official said.

Another major change, said Mr. Ravichandran, was using a new ‘grid structure’.

“The new grid-structure called the triangular-cubic octahedral generates more grids, and therefore higher resolution, over the tropical regions than the poles. As weather here is more volatile, this is more important for our forecast purposes,” he said.



## Accurate Rainfall Forecasts



### Inaccurate Forecasts

Unreliable rainfall predictions

### Data Collection

Gathering weather parameters

### Model Development

IITM creates forecast model

### Implementation

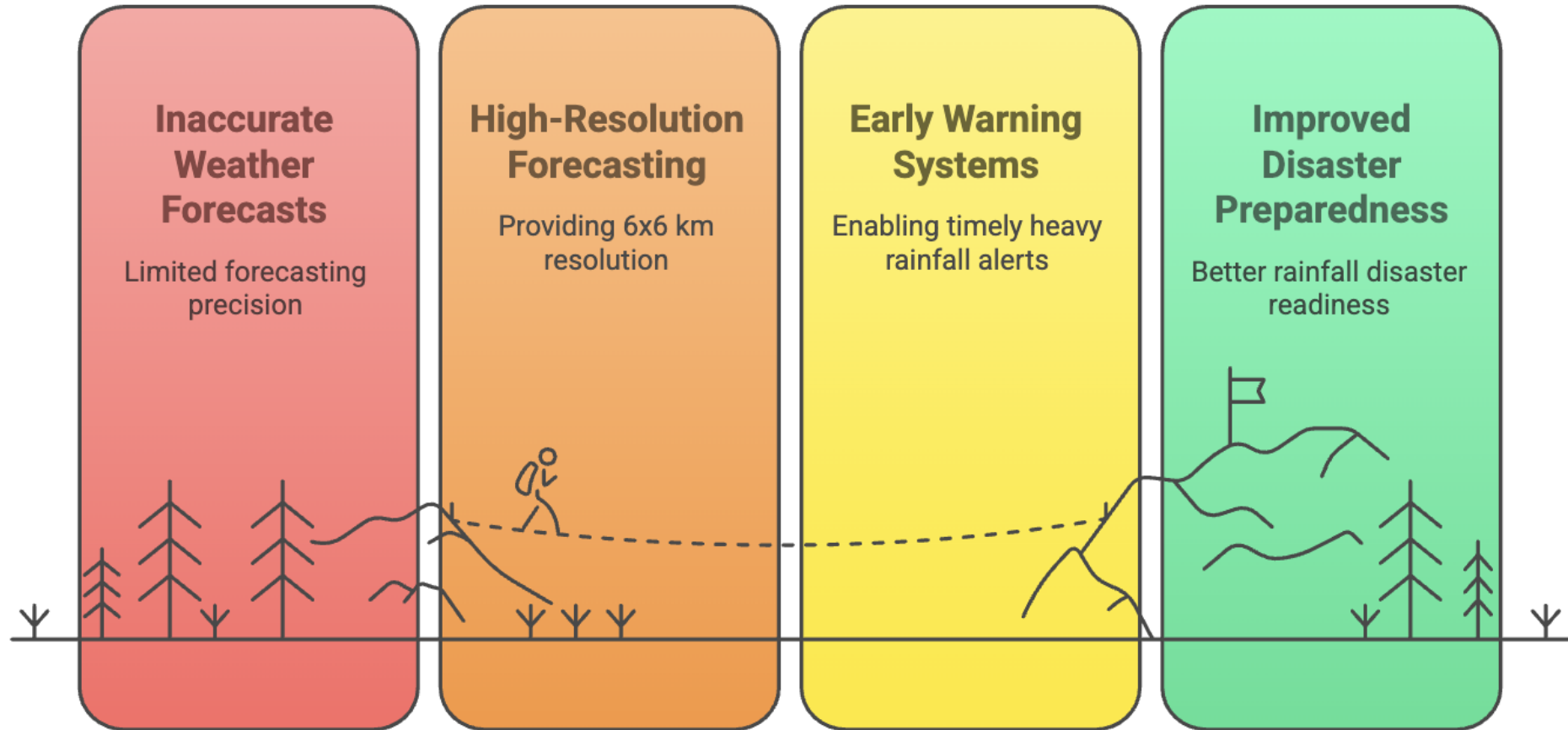
IMD launches forecasting system

## Model Comparison

Characteristic	Old model	BFS model
Grid Resolution	12-km × 12-km	6-km × 6-km
Grid Structure	Not specified	Triangular-cubic octahedral
Forecast Range	Block-level (5 days ahead)	Panchayat level



## Enhanced Weather Forecasting



# Effectiveness of BFS Model

## Sudden extreme events

Sudden extreme events are challenging for short-range BFS forecasts.



## Severe thunderstorms

Severe thunderstorms require specialized models due to long-range unpredictability.



## Daily weather updates

Daily weather updates are effectively handled by short-range BFS.



## Monthly climate trends

Monthly climate trends are less impactful and long-range.





# Comparison: Existing vs. BFS Model

Feature	Existing Forecast Model	Bharat Forecast System (BFS)
Grid size	12-km sides	6-km sides
Grid structure	Equal-sized square grids	Triangular-cubic octahedral
Resolution level	Block-level forecasts	Panchayat-level forecasts
Forecast lead time	5 days ahead	5 days ahead (more granular)
Improvement focus	General rain prediction	Precision at micro-level (villages)

## Manage anaemia before pregnancy

In my nearly four decades of practice, one recurring reality has stood out – far too many women begin pregnancy already struggling with undiagnosed anaemia. Maternal health in India is often viewed through the lens of pregnancy and childbirth, but its foundation is laid much earlier – long before conception. A woman's health at the time of conception shapes not only her pregnancy but also the well-being of her child. Yet, for more than 57% of women in their reproductive age in India, this foundation is weakened by undiagnosed and untreated anaemia. These women experience persistent fatigue, dizziness, and weakness, yet these symptoms are more than often dismissed as routine. By the time they conceive, their haemoglobin levels are already dangerously low, increasing the risk of preterm birth, low birth weight, and life-threatening maternal complications such as pre-eclampsia and post-partum hemorrhage, all of which contribute to maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality. While efforts to limit maternal health have helped bring down the Maternal Mortality Ratio to 93 per 1,00,000 live births in India, sustaining and accelerating this progress requires a shift in approach. Achieving further reductions, and aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals, means going beyond interventions during pregnancy to include proactive measures much earlier. To truly transform anaemia prevention and management, we must reframe the approach to emphasise preconception care. The question should not only be, "Are you ready for motherhood?" but also, "Is your body ready for pregnancy?"

**A comprehensive approach** For decades, oral Iron-Folate Acid (IFA) supplementation has been the primary strategy for preventing and managing anaemia. While beneficial, oral



**Nitya Francis**  
Head  
Professor,  
Department of  
Gynaecology and  
Obstetrics, Jawaharlal  
Nehru Medical  
College, Bangalore,  
Karnataka

IFA has limitations – many women struggle with nausea, loose motions, constipation, and poor absorption, leading to low adherence. Moreover, for women with long-standing anaemia, the short window of pregnancy is often insufficient to restore their iron levels through oral supplements alone. As a result, their proximity to communities uniquely positions them to highlight the importance of preconception screening, ensuring women recognise that these check-ups are as critical as antenatal visits in preventing life-threatening complications. **A societal imperative** Improving maternal health is not merely a medical responsibility; it is a societal imperative. Families, healthcare systems, policymakers, and communities must work collaboratively, proactively, and with sustained commitment. Failing to address anaemia and other deficiencies before conception does a disservice not only to women, but also to future generations whose potential begins before birth. By normalising preconception check-ups, expanding the use of interventions such as IV FCM, and refining existing oral IFA strategies (especially adherence patterns – daily versus alternate or twice-weekly), we can provide every woman in India with the opportunity for a safe, healthy, and dignified pregnancy. The time for action is now. No woman should enter pregnancy anaemic. No woman should be anaemic during pregnancy due to preventable deficiencies. No woman should leave childbirth weaker than she entered it. Making preconception care as routine as antenatal care is not optional – it is essential, urgent, and transformative. If we wait our next generation to be healthier and smarter (as iron-deficient foetal and infant brain development, mothers must be healthy at the start of pregnancy. Shifting to an approach that is

Far too many women begin pregnancy already struggling with undiagnosed anaemia. This must change

## Arms deals: India moves away from Russia; Pakistan from the U.S.

India has increased its dependency on Western countries, while Pakistan has relied extensively on China

### DATA POINT

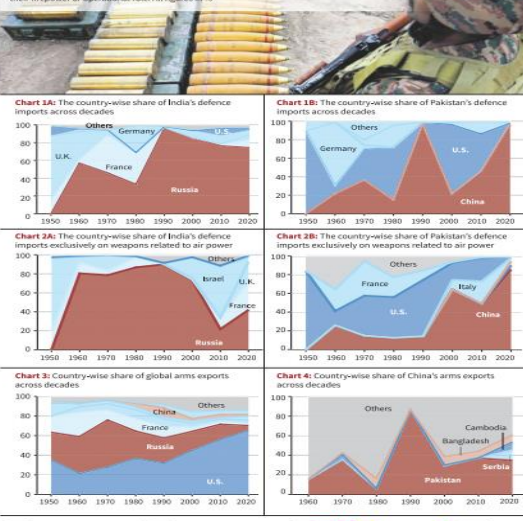
**Nitya Francis**  
Vice-Chief, Radhakrishnan

While India effectively utilised many of its indigenous defence systems during Operation Sindoor, it also relied on weapons built in collaboration with Israel, such as the SkyStriker drone, and those imported from Russia, such as the Pechora and OSA-AK missiles. Pakistan used Chinese-origin PL-15 missiles and Turkish-origin Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. An analysis of arms transfer data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute shows that over the past decade, there has been a significant shift in the sourcing of weapons for both India and Pakistan. India has gradually reduced its dependence on Russia and has increasingly turned to Western countries such as France, the U.S., and the U.K. A significant portion of its arms imports also comes from Israel. The data reflect the quantity of weapons imported, without accounting for their firepower or operational role. **Chart 1A** shows the country-wise share of India's defence imports. Starting from the 1960s, India began to consistently source more than 33% of its weapons from Russia (formerly the Soviet Union). This dependence peaked in the 1990s, when Russia accounted for an overwhelming 86.8% of India's imports. From then, Russia's share steadily dropped, falling to a still substantial 79% in the 2020s. This drop was offset by increased imports from other countries: In the 2020s, France accounted for over 9%, the U.K. for 5.5%, Israel for nearly 5%, and the U.S. for close to 3% of India's weapons imports. In contrast, Pakistan has historically sourced the majority of its weapons from both China and the U.S. over several decades. However, in the 2020s, China has

emerged as Pakistan's dominant arms supplier. **Chart 1B** illustrates the country-wise share of Pakistan's defence imports. In the 2020s, nearly 95% of Pakistan's arms imports came from China, marking a sharp rise from 41% in the 2010s and just 19% in the 2000s. Meanwhile, the U.S.'s share declined from nearly 67% in the 2000s to 38% in the 2010s to merely 0.85% in the 2020s. Apart from overall arms procurement, specific weapons and aircraft were also points of discussion during the recent conflict. The Indian Air Force played a crucial role in "delivering precision strikes against terror infrastructure across Pakistan". Additionally, the IAF's control of the airspace proved "pivotal in protecting Indian airspace during retaliatory drone and UAV attacks". **Charts 2A and 2B** present the same data as Chart 1A and 1B, but focus exclusively on weapons related to air power. India's dependence on countries apart from Russia is even more evident in this regard. In the 2020s, India has procured more than 85% of its weapons related to air power from France, the U.K., and Israel. Pakistan's dependence on China is also even more pronounced in this regard. Over the past three decades, between 50% and 85% of Pakistan's air-related imports have come from China. While the U.S.'s share in Pakistan's arms imports has significantly declined, its share in India's imports is only gradually rising, the superpower continues to dominate global arms exports overall (**Chart 3**). In the 2020s, more than 65% of the world's arms exports originated from the U.S. Russia's share has dwindled to 5% in the 2020s, which coincides with its invasion of Ukraine. Interestingly, China accounts for less than 2% of total exports worldwide in the 2020s. A significant portion of its limited exports (0.32%) is directed to Pakistan (**Chart 4**).

### Swing in defence

The data used in this story reflects the quantity of weapons imported, without accounting for their firepower or operational role. All figures in %



## A seasonal storm for the RJD

Tej Pratap's expulsion has only provided fresh ammunition to the BJP

### STATE OF PLAY

**Sobhana K. Nair**  
sobhana.nair@hinduonlinelibrary.in

On May 25, Rashtriya Jani Dal (RJD) patriarch Lalu Prasad expelled his eldest son, Tej Pratap Yadav, from the party for six years and also cut ties with him. Mr. Prasad's announcement on X was prompted by a now-deleted Facebook post by Mr. Tej Pratap in which he revealed that he had been "in a relationship for 12 years" with a woman. He later claimed that his Facebook account had been hacked, but did not file a police complaint. In 2018, Mr. Tej Pratap married Aishwarya Rai, the granddaughter of former Chief Minister of Bihar, Phoolan Prasad Rai. Within five months of their wedding, Ms. Rai filed for divorce.

Mr. Prasad wrote on X, "Ignoring moral values in personal life weakens the collective struggle for social cause. The conduct of a leader and irresponsible behaviour of the eldest son are not in accordance with our family values and traditions. Therefore, due to the above circumstances, I remove him from the party and family. From now on, he will not have any role of any kind in the party and family. He is expelled from the party for six years".

Of Mr. Prasad's nine children, four are in active politics. Mr. Prasad's eldest daughter, Misa Bharati, is a Lok Sabha MP. His youngest son, Tejashwi Yadav, is the Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly. Mr. Tej Pratap is an MLA from Hasanpur constituency and Rolan Acharya unsuccessfully contested the 2024 general elections. For the family, politics is of

### Bihar

ten personal. Mr. Prasad was in jail when Ms. Bharati was born in 1975. At the time, he was booked under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), 1971 – a notorious legislation aimed at curbing political dissent; it was later repealed. According to Mr. Prasad, it was the socialist and freedom fighter, Jai Prakash Narayan, who suggested that Mr. Prasad name his daughter Misa, after the law under which he was incarcerated.

In 2013, when Mr. Prasad was convicted and sentenced to five years in jail in the 2G scam case, his wife Kabri Devi took over the mantle from him. Then Mr. Tejashwi Yadav stepped into his father's shoes much to the chagrin of not only Mr. Tej Pratap, but also senior party members. This is not the first time that Mr. Prasad is getting into a scrape. In 2019, just before the general elections, he resigned from all positions in the RJD in protest against the party's decision to field his form father-in-law, Chandrila Rai, from the Saran constituency. He went on to form a new party named after his parents – Lalu-Kabri Morcha. The family managed to contain the damage. In March 2024, videos of him slapping and pushing party workers off stage went viral. With occasional apogees and setbacks, these incidents were brushed under the carpet. The family made both private

and public efforts to ensure that underlying tensions did not come to the fore. In his two stints as Deputy Chief Minister, Mr. Tejashwi Yadav touched his elder's brother's feet at public meetings, a gesture meant to demonstrate that the family hierarchy is intact even though he may have outstripped him in politics.

Dynastic politics may appear to be the antithesis of democracy, yet it is an inescapable reality for most world democracies. Even in political parties that brand themselves "anti-dynasty", the top leaders are often dynasts. Similarly, struggle for control of the party by family members is not new. Many unseemly battles have played out under the public glare in India – from the struggle to seize control of the Thugli Desam Party in 1995 to the contest between Nanaawadi Party chief Mulyam Singh Yadav and his son Akhilesh Yadav in 2017. Recently too, Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati expelled her nephew Akash Anand only to bring him back into the party.

This move is significant as Bihar is going to the polls. In the last two Assembly elections, the RJD emerged as the single largest party in Bihar. In 2015, it won 41 seats and in 2020, it secured 75 seats. Both times, it came within striking distance of victory, but ran out of steam in the last mile. To-day, once again, the RJD-led "Mahagathabandhan" is facing a formidable Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance. The caste arithmetic is stacked against the Mahagathabandhan. Given this context, this controversy was entirely avoidable for the RJD. Mr. Tej Pratap's expulsion has only provided fresh ammunition to the BJP. It remains to be seen how swiftly the RJD can put a lid on this controversy.

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

**The Hindu**

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 27, 1975

### America's concern over NATO's health

Washington, May 26: On the eve of President Ford's visit to Europe this week to attend the NATO conference in Brussels some of the preoccupation here has been with the current health of the alliance, and what, if anything, the U.S. can do to rejuvenate it. The latter, of course, is based on the assumption that the U.S., now that it rid of its self-imposed Indo-China burden, is in a position to pay more attention to Europe, and that the U.S. allies on the other side of the Atlantic believe that the Ford Administration is willing and able to provide the leadership and resources needed to modernise the NATO and strengthen the collaboration among its members.

The Atlantic alliance, as viewed from this side of the Ocean, has developed serious symptoms of consumption. The south western flank of the NATO has frayed, with Portugal threatening to go communist or neutral – only last week Mr. Ford was talking darkly about the likelihood of expelling Portugal from the alliance.

The suggestion that Spain be induced to take the place of Portugal is not expected to win the approval of the Europeans who dislike General Franco. The Ford Administration's recent success in inducing the Senate to lift the embargo on arms to Turkey (imposed as a punishment for its invasion of Cyprus) may prove temporary if the House of Representatives, which is more pro-Greek, reverses, as many expect it will, the narrow (40 to 40) vote in the Upper House – this could push Turkey to carry out its threat about leaving the NATO and leave the south-eastern flank of the NATO also in serious trouble. Elsewhere in Europe Britain is on the verge of economic bankruptcy and Italy is on the brink of political and economic anarchy; the two U.K. men of Europe are hardly the pride of the NATO.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 27, 1925

### Ban on poison gas in warfare

Geneva, May 26: A favourable impression was produced last night by the German declaration at the Technical Committee of the Arms Commission to the effect that Germany was prepared to sign the international convention prohibiting the use of poison gas in warfare.

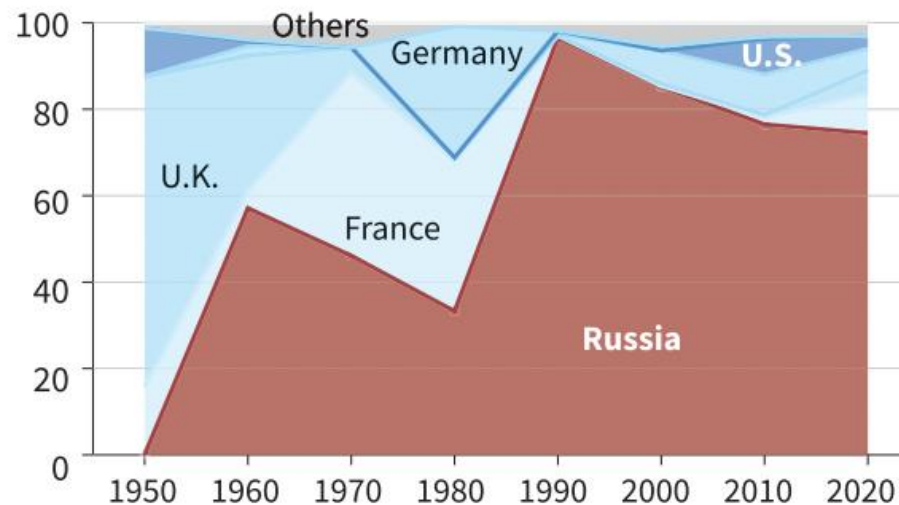


# Swing in defence

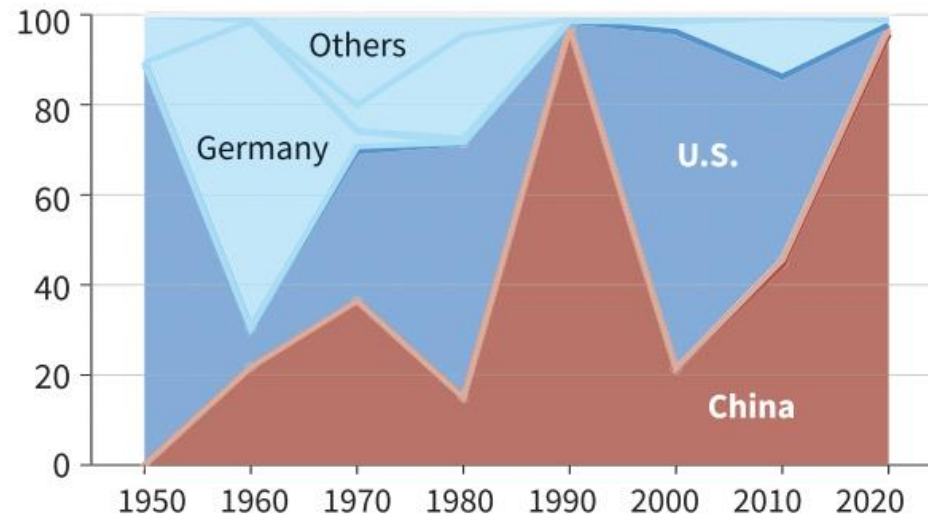
The data for the charts were sourced from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. The data used in the story reflects the quantity of weapons imported, without accounting for their firepower or operational role. All figures in %



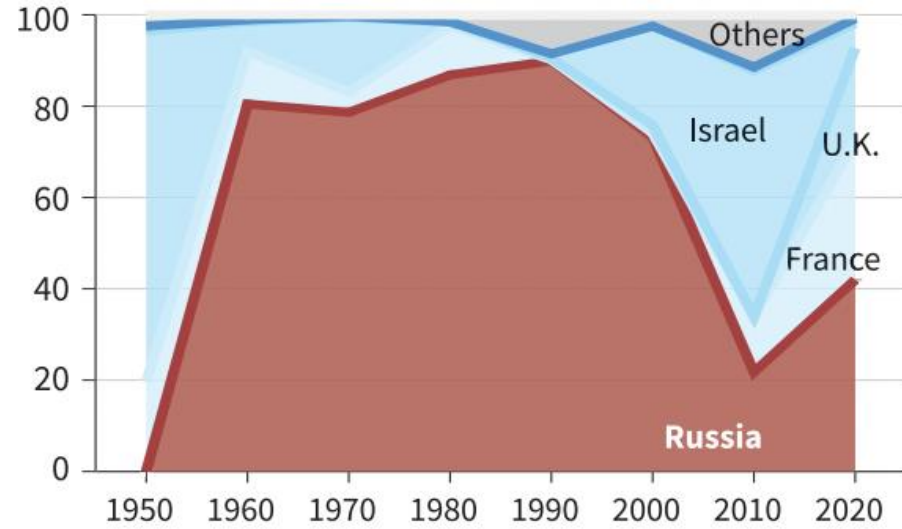
**Chart 1A:** The country-wise share of India's defence imports across decades



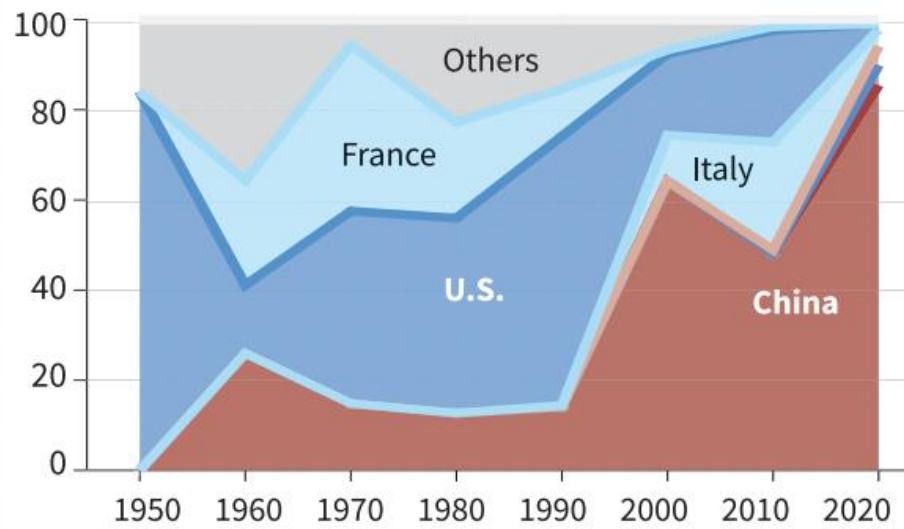
**Chart 1B:** The country-wise share of Pakistan's defence imports across decades



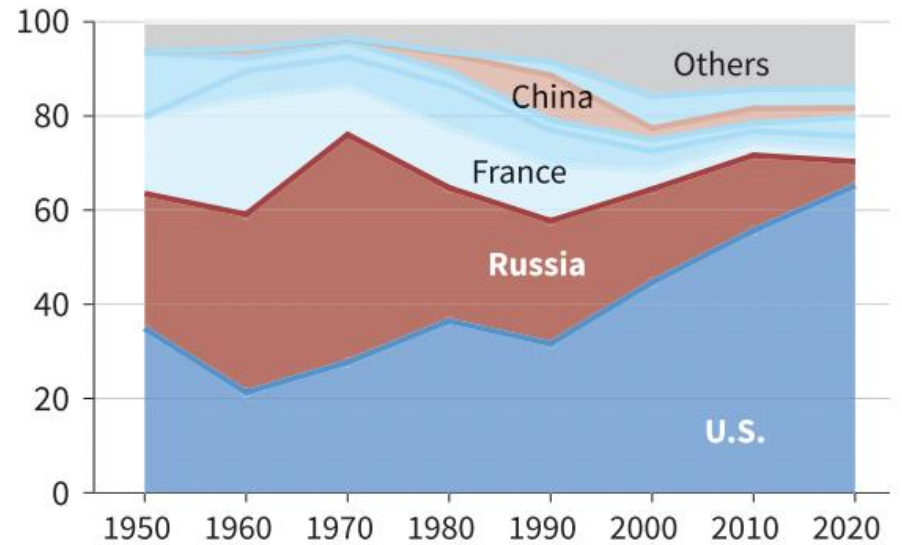
**Chart 2A:** The country-wise share of India's defence imports exclusively on weapons related to air power



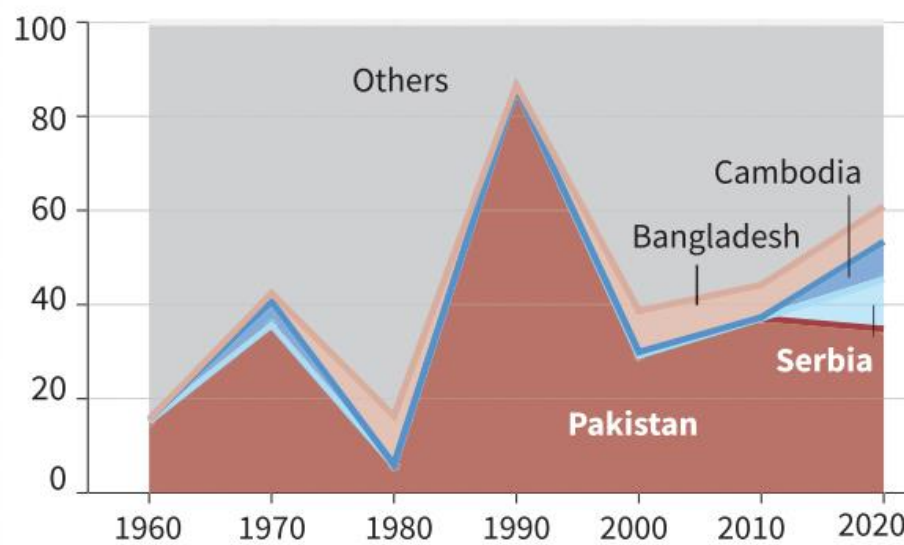
**Chart 2B:** The country-wise share of Pakistan's defence imports exclusively on weapons related to air power



**Chart 3:** Country-wise share of global arms exports across decades



**Chart 4:** Country-wise share of China's arms exports across decades





Platform set for a triple century in subscriber base, courtesy IPL

# JioHotstar closes in on Netflix's global score

ALOKANADA  
CHAKRABORTY  
New Delhi, May 26

**THE INDIAN PREMIER** League's 2025 edition has put JioHotstar within striking distance of Netflix's global subscriber base of 300 million. According to a report by *Financial Times*, subscriptions to the over the top (OTT) platform born out of the merger of Disney+ Hotstar and Jio Cinema barely three months ago have jumped to 280 million this month, up from 200 million reported by the platform in April.

The *FT* report quotes Sanjog Gupta, JioStar's chief executive for sports, saying, "It has been the biggest season of IPL till now both in terms of viewership as well as monetisation." JioStar is eyeing a revenue of ₹4,500 crore from the event.

## NUMBERS GAME

■ JioHotstar subscriber base has jumped to **280 million** in May, up from 200 million reported by the platform in April

■ Netflix's global subscriber base is **300 million**



■ With revenues of **₹26,000 cr** (FY24), JioStar is India's second largest media company after Google

■ JioHotstar competes with global giants Netflix, Prime Video, and YouTube in the Indian streaming market

With revenues of ₹26,000 crore (FY24), JioStar is India's second largest media company after Google. Launched on February 14 this year, the JioHotstar OTT platform started its innings with 50 million paid subscribers. Over the next two months, it

added a whopping 150 million subscribers.

That early surge was attributed in large part to the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy hosted by the Pakistan Cricket Board from February 19 to March 9, 2025 that featured 15 matches held

across three venues in Pakistan and one in the United Arab Emirates.

Overall, the platform had laid out an aggressive launch plan. It worked with over 70 phone manufacturers and over 40 connected TV (CTV) manufacturers

to make the app as widely available as possible as it was being rolled out. Second, it offered an interesting proposition that allowed users to consume content from across its library for a certain number of hours for free before nudging them towards a paid subscription.

Finally, though the content library doubled overnight with the merger, it didn't hike its pricing and retained the Hotstar pricing. "At a price point of ₹49 a month, we succeeded in shifting OTT content from a want to a need," Kiran Mani, CEO, digital, JioStar, had told BrandWagon then. As things stand, JioHotstar competes with global giants Netflix, Prime Video, and YouTube in the Indian streaming market.

**Continued on Page 9**



1,200 ELECTRIC LOCOS TO BE BUILT FOR ₹21,405 CRORE AT DAHOD, GUJARAT

# PM inaugurates made-in-India loco

ADITI RAJA  
& DHEERAJ MISHRA  
Dahod/New Delhi, May 26

**PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA** Modi on Monday inaugurated the first 9,000 horsepower locomotive manufactured at the rolling stock workshop facility in Dahod. The locomotive, called D9, is the second-most powerful locomotive of the Indian Railways after the 12,000 horsepower WAG-12B. Once “counted among the 100 backward districts in the country”, Modi said Dahod now finds itself on the world map.

“Made in India locomotives from Dahod will also now be exported to various countries across the world... It will also generate employment in the tribal region and support ancillary industries,” he said.

Over the next 11 years, the Dahod facility is expected to produce 1,200 electric freight locomotives at a total estimated cost of ₹21,405 crore. At present, the railways has around 12,000 electric locomotives.

While the Prime Minister laid the foundation of new



Prime Minister Narendra Modi flags off the country's first 9,000 horsepower locomotive engine, a locomotive manufacturing shop and rolling stock workshop, in Dahod on Monday

PTI

loco unit in Dahod on April 20, 2022, German engineering giant Siemens bagged the contract for manufacturing and maintenance of these locomotives employing railways manpower at four depots viz, Visakhapatnam, Raipur, Kharagpur and Pune, for 35 years.

Modi said India used to buy

railway coaches from abroad. “Now the money is ours, the work is ours and the result is ours. Today, India has become a big exporter in the world for railway manufacturing. Coaches of metro trains in Australia are made in Gujarat... In London, France, Mexico, Spain, Germany and Italy, too, Made in India railway products are in

use. Our passenger coaches are in Mozambique, Sri Lanka and other countries,” he said.

The 9,000 horsepower locomotives are planned to be used primarily on the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor to increase the average speed of trains to around 50-60 kmph compared with the existing 20-25 kmph. They have an AC

cabin for the loco pilot and a toilet as well.

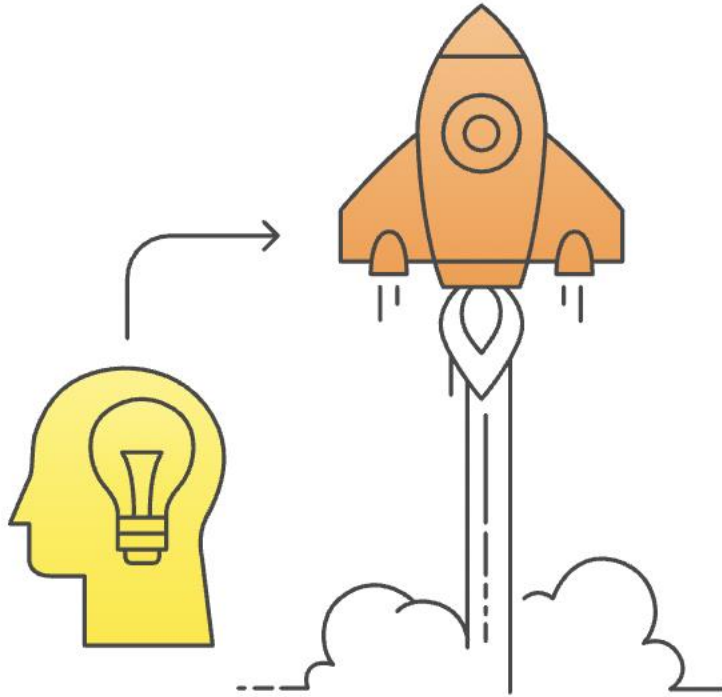
These locomotives can carry 4,500 tonnes of cargo in double stack configuration at the maximum speed of 75 kmph.

These locomotives will be equipped with regenerative braking systems, and are being designed to reduce energy consumption.

The ministry is collaborating with local engineering colleges for specialised training and skilled workforce, a Railways official said. “The whole initiative is part of ‘Make in India’, which will boost domestic manufacturing. The locomotive will enhance the line capacity by increasing the speed. It will generate over 10,000 direct and indirect jobs,” the official said.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated doubling work at Anand-Godhra, Mehsana-Palanpur, Rajkot-Hadmatiya rail lines as well as the electrification of the 107-km Sabarmati-Botad rail line and the gauge conversion of Kalol-Kadi-Katosan rail line, amounting to works of ₹2,287 crore.

## Locomotive Inauguration



### Rolling Stock Workshop


Dahod, Gujarat

### Production

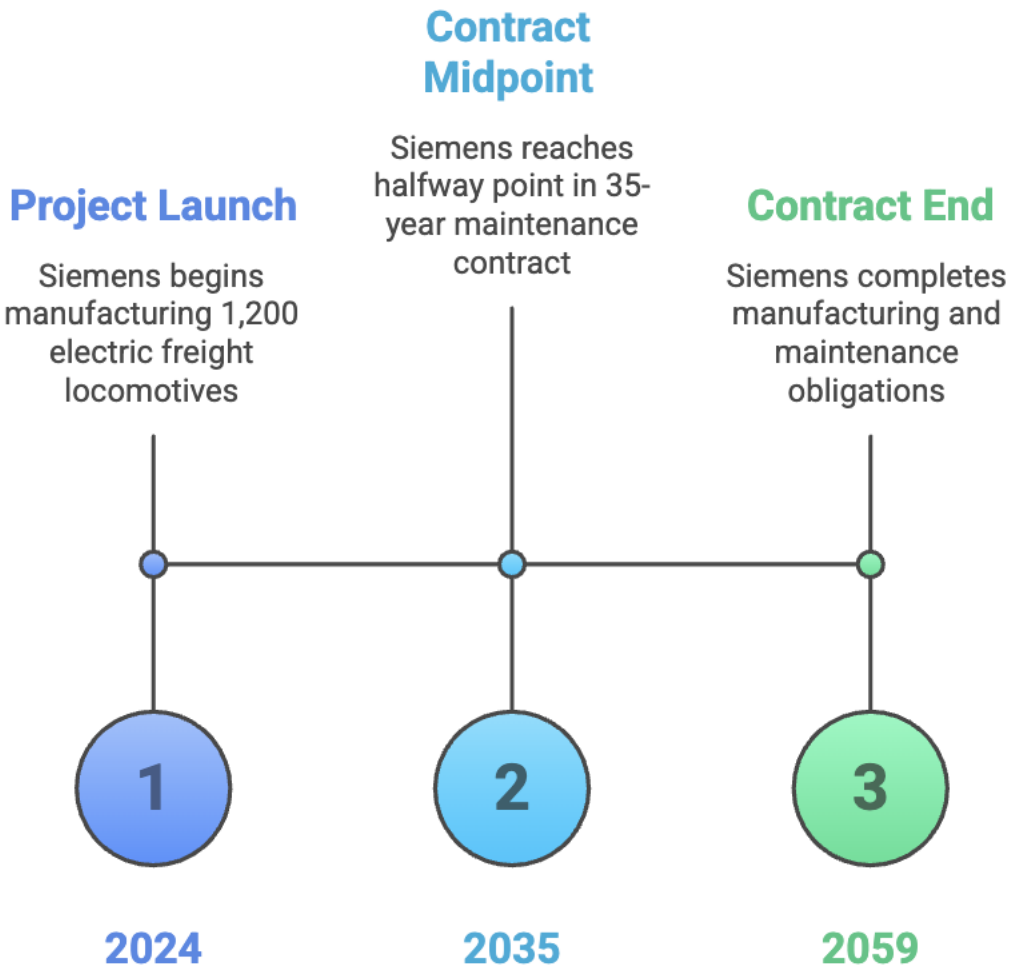
9,000-horsepower  
locomotive  
manufacturing







## D9 Locomotive Features

Characteristic	Description
 <b>Power</b>	India's second-most powerful
 <b>Energy Efficiency</b>	Regenerative braking
 <b>Pilot Comfort</b>	AC cabin and toilet
 <b>Capacity</b>	4,500 tonnes at 75 kmph

# Dahod Facility Electric Freight Locomotive Project

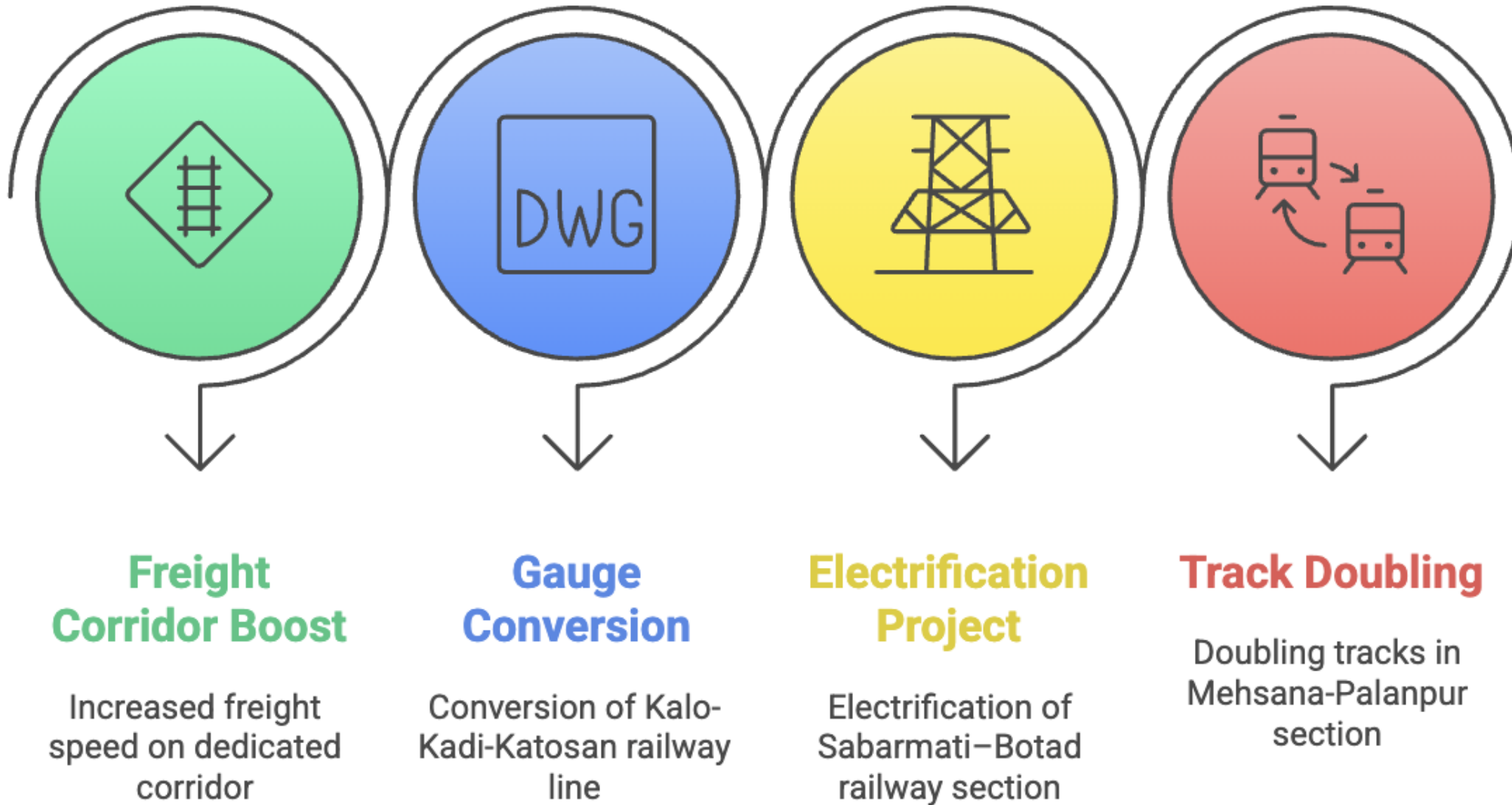


# India as Railway Manufacturing Exporter

Characteristic	India
 <b>Export Status</b>	Net exporter
 <b>Metro Train Clients</b>	Australia
 <b>Passenger Train Clients</b>	Mozambique, Sri Lanka
 <b>Rail Product Clients</b>	London, France, Mexico...



# Railway Infrastructure Projects



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

➤ The predominant variant in new cases in India is **JN.1**, accounting for **53% of tested samples**, while **BA.2** follows with **26%**. Other **Omicron** sub-lineages make up **20%**

➤ JN.1 is a descendant of Omicron BA.2.86. It's not lethal and doesn't cause serious illness. Cases of **NB.1.8.1** and **LF.7**, too, have been detected in India. Both have been classified as 'Variants Under Monitoring' by WHO, and not as 'Variants of Concern' or 'Variants of Interest'



File photo of health workers in Vijayawada masking up as a precaution against Covid-19

### If You Develop Any Flu-Like Symptoms...

- It is best to immediately isolate yourself regardless of their severity
- Wear a mask at home if you're living with others, especially with elderly people or anyone with underlying health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, heart disease, or cancer
- Avoid visiting public places, workplace, schools, or events until you've recovered fully, even if you feel it's "just a cold"



### When Stepping Out To Work...

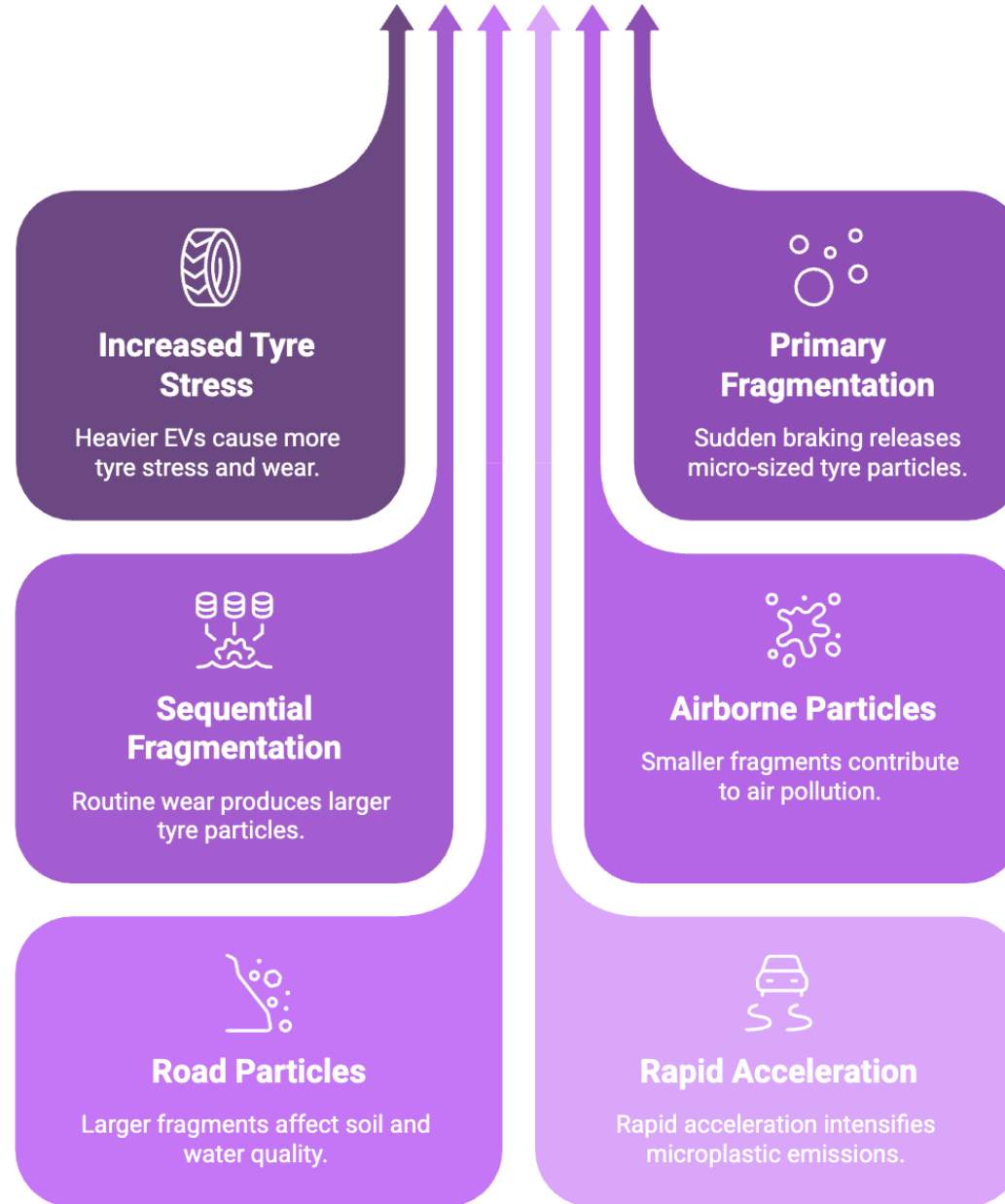
- Wear a mask in crowded or poorly ventilated areas. A well-fitted N95 or surgical mask is effective
- Carry and use a hand sanitiser after touching surfaces like handrails, door handles, elevator buttons, etc
- Avoid touching your face, especially the mouth, nose, and eyes, while in transit or in shared spaces
- Maintain physical distancing where feasible. In public transport, try to avoid standing face-to-face or in tightly packed clusters. Opt for open-air or ventilated spaces whenever possible
- Stay home if you're feeling unwell. Going out while symptomatic risks infecting others. If you have fever, cough, sore throat, or body aches, take it seriously — rest, isolate, and consult a doctor if needed

- A recent study reveals that while electric vehicles (EVs) reduce greenhouse gas emissions, their heavier weight leads to increased tyre wear, releasing more microplastic pollution—challenging the notion that EVs are fully eco-friendly.

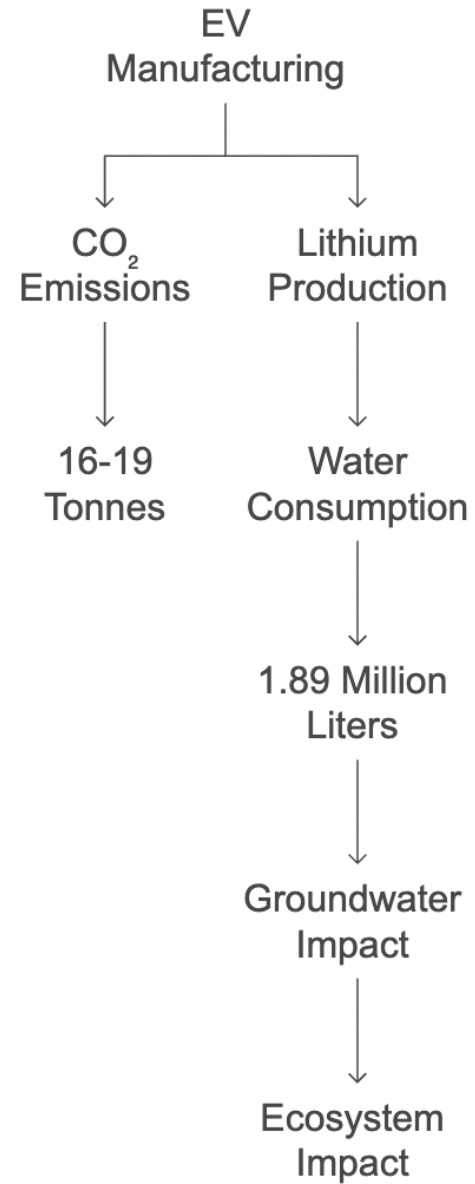




# The Hidden Cost of Electric Vehicles

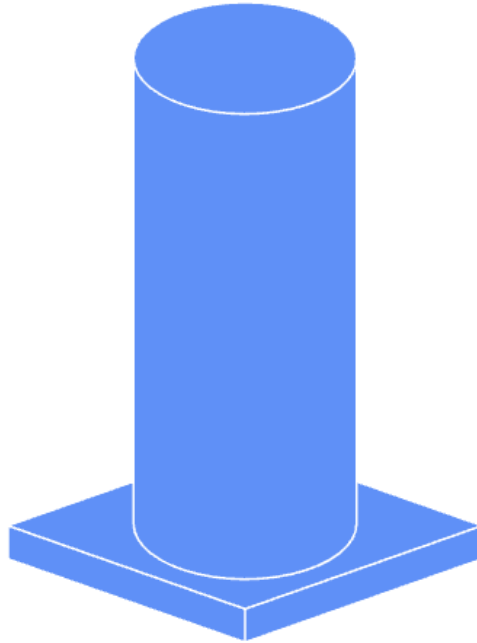


# Environmental Impact of Lithium-Ion Battery Production



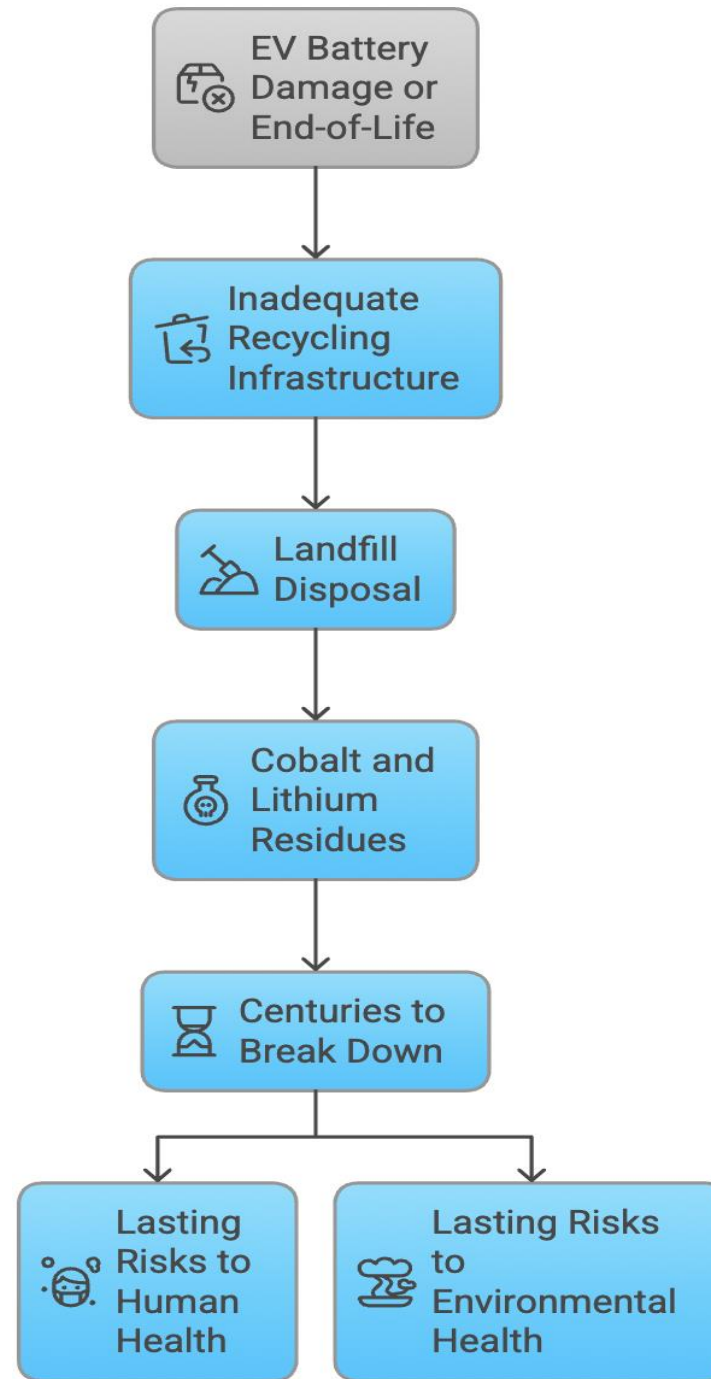
# CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from Indian Power Sources

825



**Coal-fired Power  
Plants**

Dominant source for EV  
charging



Extraction of every tonne of lithium requires 5,00,000 LITRES OF WATER



EV is almost twice as environment-unfriendly as an ICE-car

An EV vehicle needs a battery capacity of 60kWh

The batteries emit toxic fumes, if damaged

India currently IMPORTS ALL OF ITS LITHIUM from Australia and Argentina



Cobalt mining is akin to modern-day slavery with **CHILDREN AS YOUNG AS FOUR** involved in it

Manufacturing EVs is about **50% MORE** water-intensive than ICE

EVs currently priced **25-35% HIGHER** than ICE counterpart



Recycling rates for **LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES** are about 5 percent

CO<sub>2</sub>

**150 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>** released to create every kWh of battery capacity

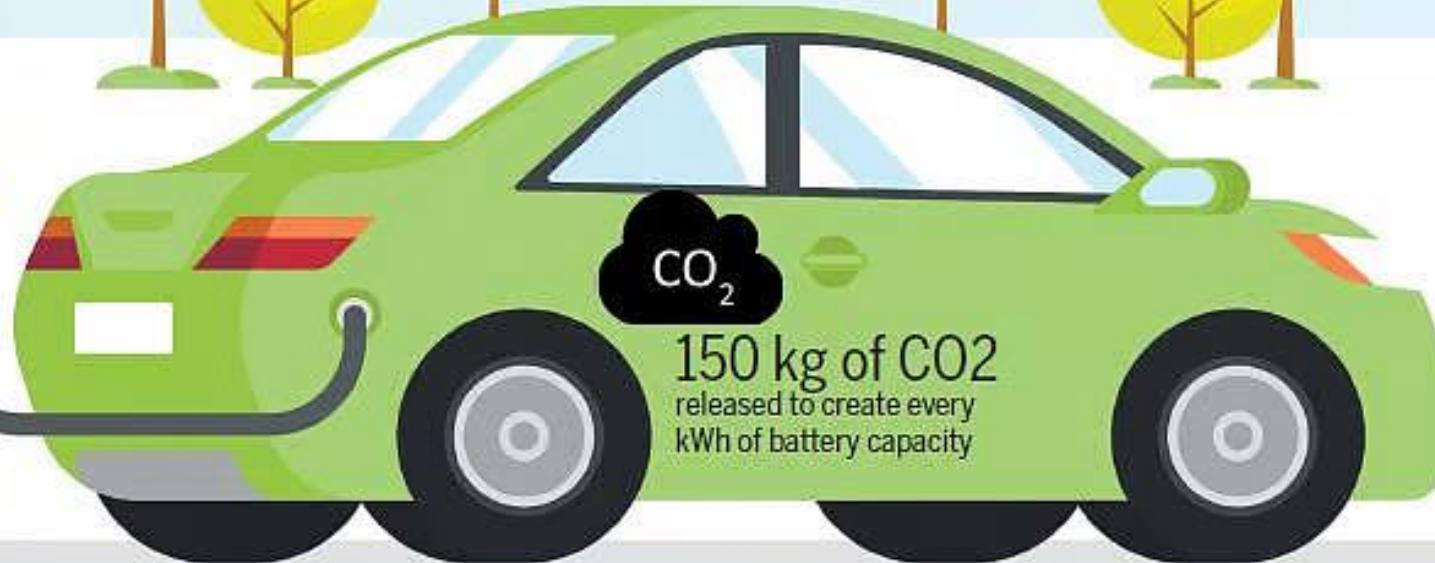
**98%** of the batteries end up in **LANDFILLS**

The battery comprises mined materials, including **LITHIUM, NEODYMIUM, COPPER, COBALT, ALUMINIUM, NICKEL, MANGANESE AND GRAPHITE**. Some of these are available only in a few countries.

The process of mining, refining and transportation adds to **GREENHOUSE GASES**

The net negative impact of EVs today is greater for coal-intensive countries like India

An additional electricity generation of **3,000 terawatt hours** would be needed to fuel the rising demand of EVs







# Updated India's Coastline Length

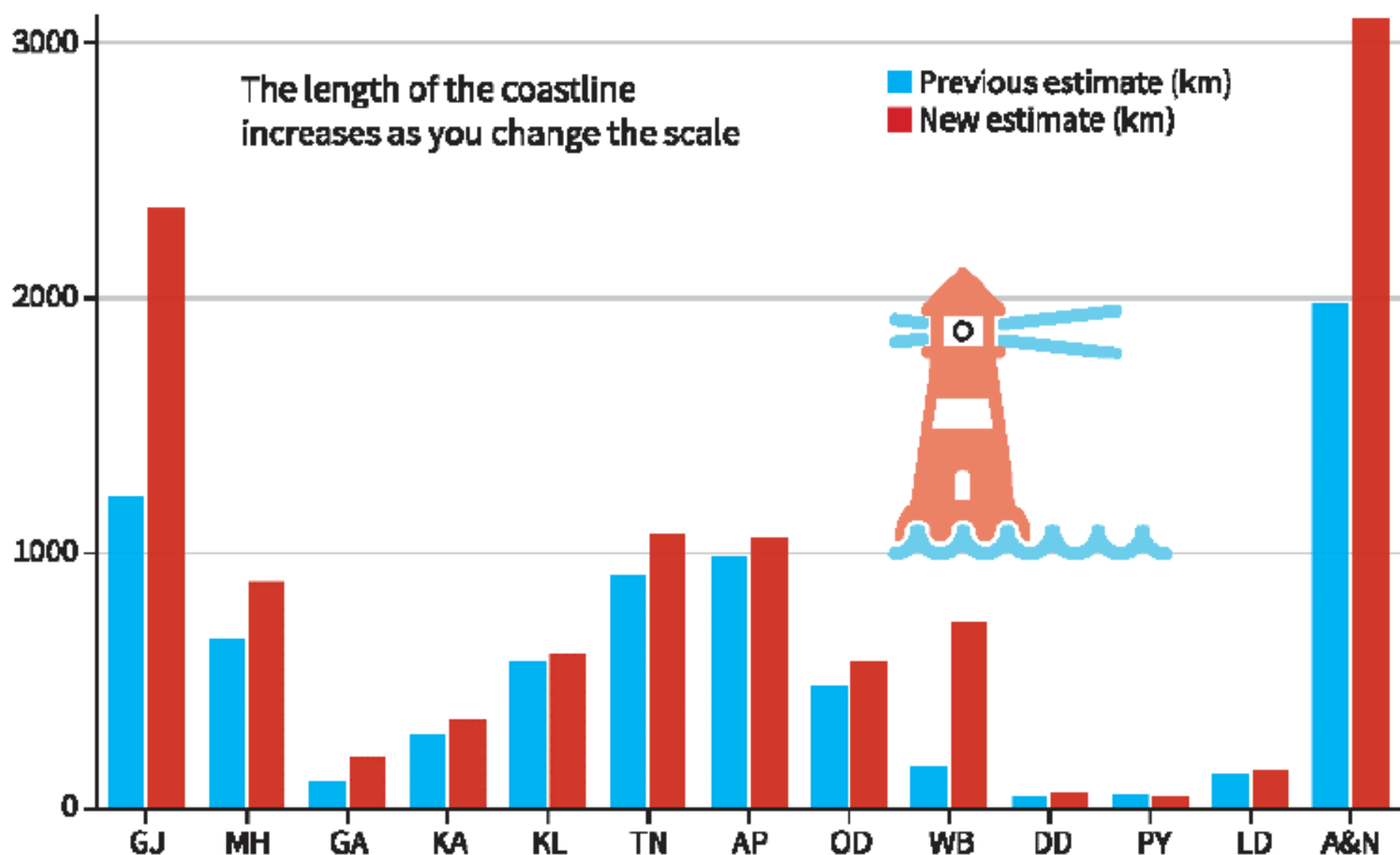


The Ministry of Home Affairs, in its 2023–24 report, updated India's coastline length to 11,099 km, up from 7,516.6 km.

The change stems not from land gain but due to better mapping precision, highlighting the coastline paradox.



# The coast grows



Sources: Survey of India, Ministry of Home Affairs - GA = Goa; DD = Daman & Diu; LD = Lakshadweep Islands

## India's Coastline Length – Key Overview:

Previous Length: 7,516.6 km (based on 1970s maps at 1:4,500,000 scale).

Revised Length: **11,098.8 km** (as of Dec 2024).

States Involved: 11 coastal States + 2 UTs (Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep).

Key Feature: Longest coastline among Indian states — **Gujarat (~1,600 km)**.

No New Land Added: No change in national borders or geological expansion.

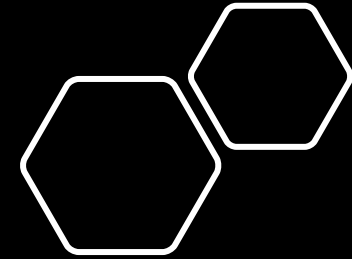


41. Consider the following countries :

- I. Austria .
- II. Bulgaria .
- III. Croatia
- IV. Serbia
- V. Sweden .
- VI. North Macedonia

How many of the above are members of  
the North Atlantic Treaty Organization?

- ~~(a) Only three~~      (b) Only four *Yes*  
(c) Only five      (d) All the six



36. Consider the following statements :

- I. India has joined the Minerals Security Partnership as a member.
- II. India is a resource-rich country in all the 30 critical minerals that it has identified.
- III. The Parliament in 2023 has amended the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 empowering the Central Government to exclusively auction mining lease and composite license for certain critical minerals.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) I and II only      (b) II and III only
- (c) I and III only      ~~(d) I, II and III~~

33. With reference to the Government of India, consider the following information :

	Organization	Some of its functions	It works under
I.	Directorate of Enforcement	Enforcement of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018	Internal Security Division-I, Ministry of Home Affairs
II.	Directorate of Revenue Intelligence	Enforces the Provisions of the Customs Act, 1962	Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance
III.	Directorate General of Systems and Data Management	Carrying out big data analytics to assist tax officers for better policy and nabbing tax evaders	Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance

In how many of the above rows is the information correctly matched?

- (a) Only one      ~~(b) Only two~~  
 (c) All the three      (d) None



**31.** With reference to investments, consider the following :

I. Bonds

II. Hedge Funds

III. Stocks

IV. Venture Capital

How many of the above are treated as Alternative Investment Funds?

~~(a)~~ Only one

(b) Only two

~~(c)~~ Only three

(d) All the four

**32.** Which of the following are the sources of income for the Reserve Bank of India?

- I. Buying and selling Government bonds ✓
- II. Buying and selling foreign currency ✓
- III. Pension fund management
- IV. Lending to private companies
- V. Printing and distributing currency notes ✓

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) I and II only
- (b) II, III and IV
- (c) I, III, IV and V
- ~~(d) I, II and V~~

20. With reference to the planet Earth, consider the following statements :

- I. Rain forests produce more oxygen than that produced by oceans.
- II. Marine phytoplankton and photosynthetic bacteria produce about 50% of world's oxygen.
- III. Well-oxygenated surface water contains several folds higher oxygen than that in atmospheric air.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I and II

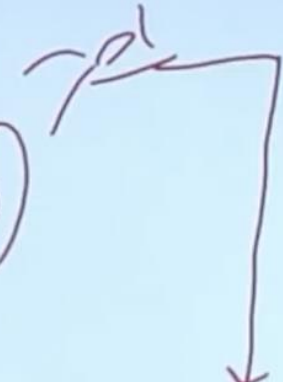
~~(b)~~ II only

(c) I and III

(d) None of the above statements is correct



Drone  
- use  
(turkey)



2. With reference to Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), consider the following statements :

- ~~I.~~ All types of UAVs can do vertical landing.
- II. All types of UAVs can do automated hovering.
- III. All types of UAVs use battery only as a source of power supply.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- ~~(b) Only two~~
- (c) All the three
- (d) None

---

# Word of the day

## **Askance:**

with suspicion or disapproval; with a side or oblique glance; (used especially of glances) directed to one side with or as if with doubt or suspicion or envy

---

**Synonyms:** asquint, sidelong, squint

---

**Usage:** *He looked askance at the offer.*

---

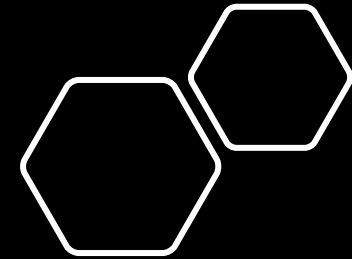
**Pronunciation:** newsth.live/askancepro

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**International Phonetic**

**Alphabet:** /ə'skæns/, /ə'ska:ns/

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# SSC CGL



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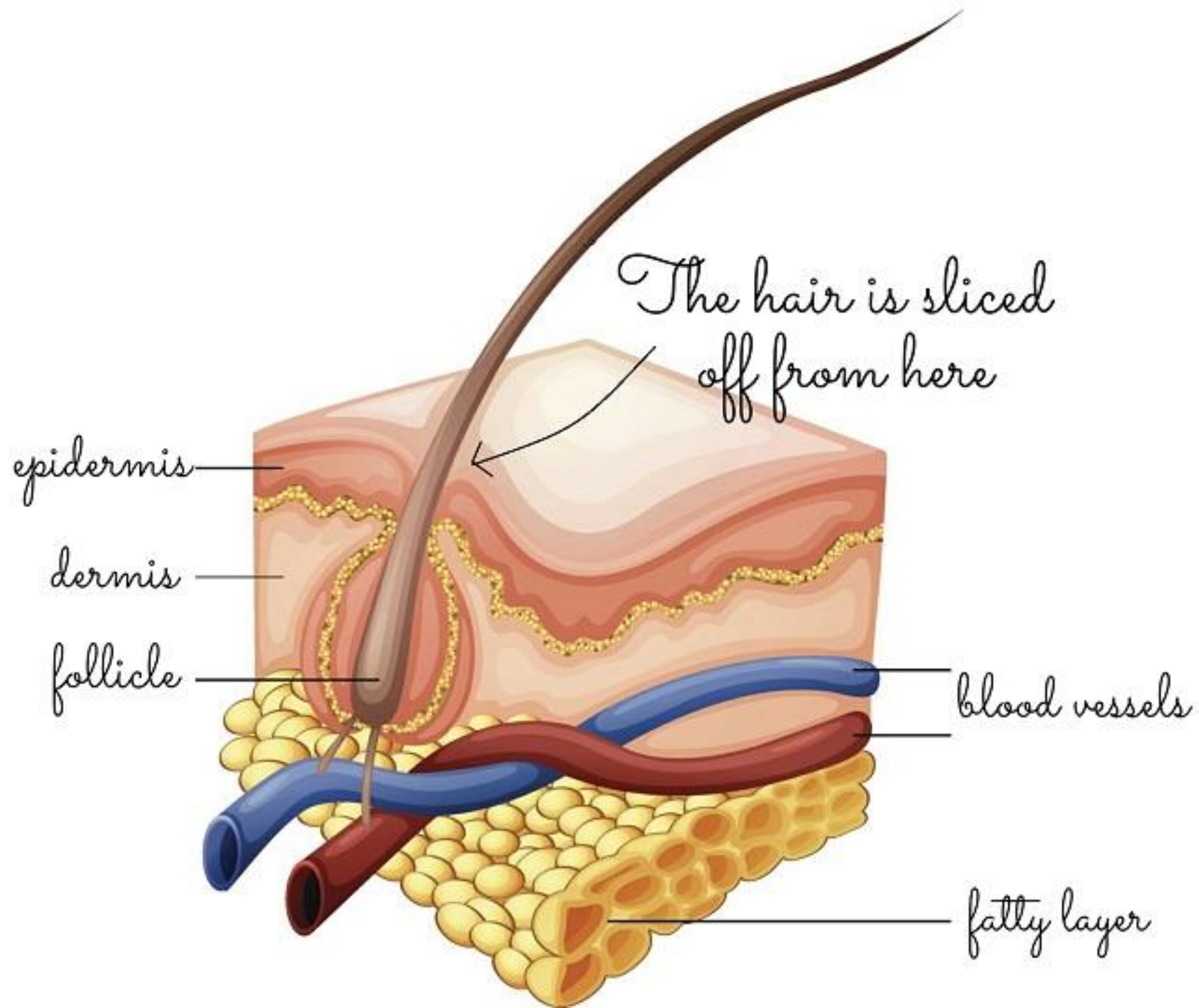


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