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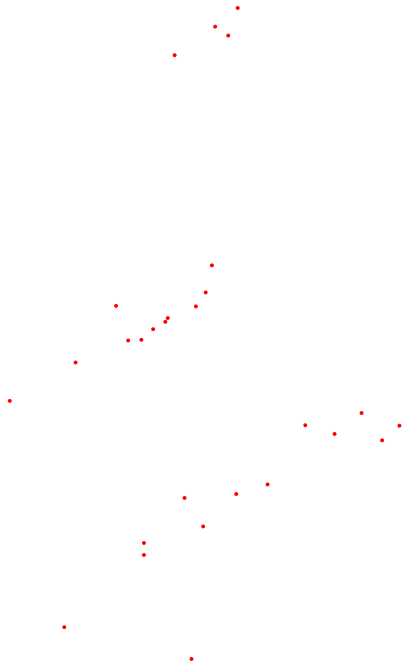


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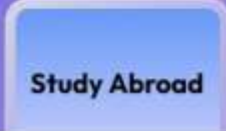
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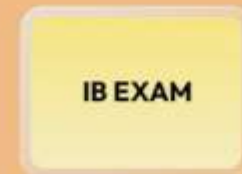


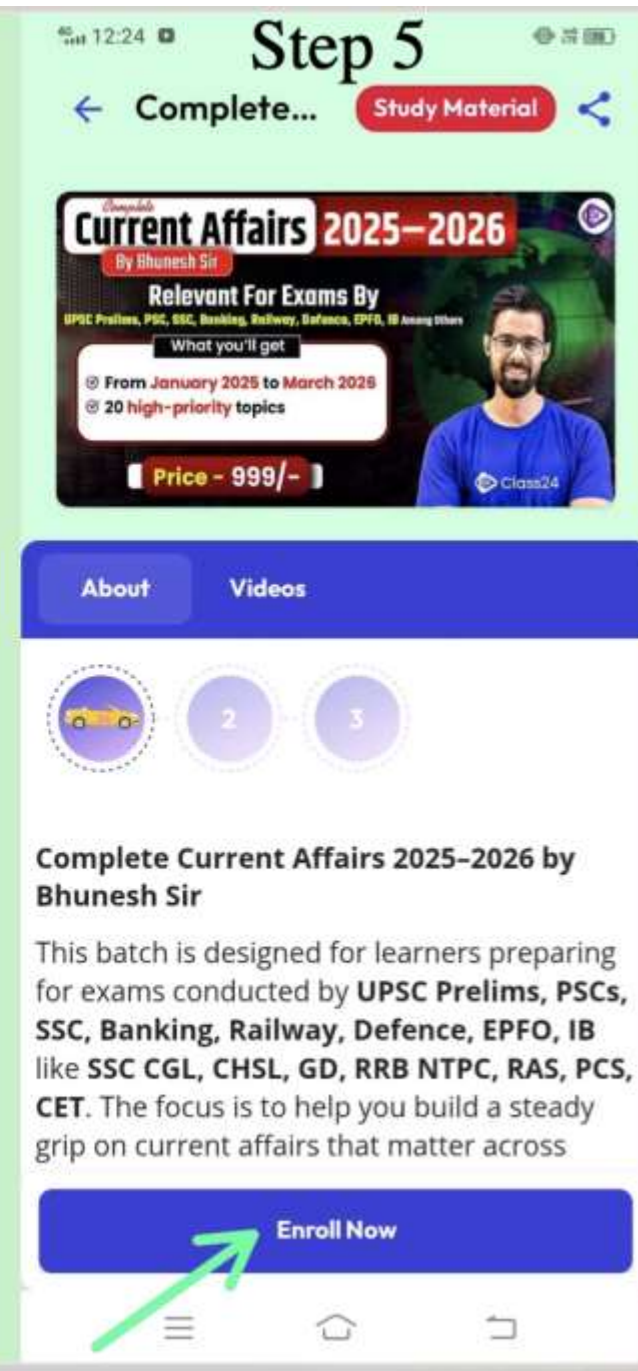
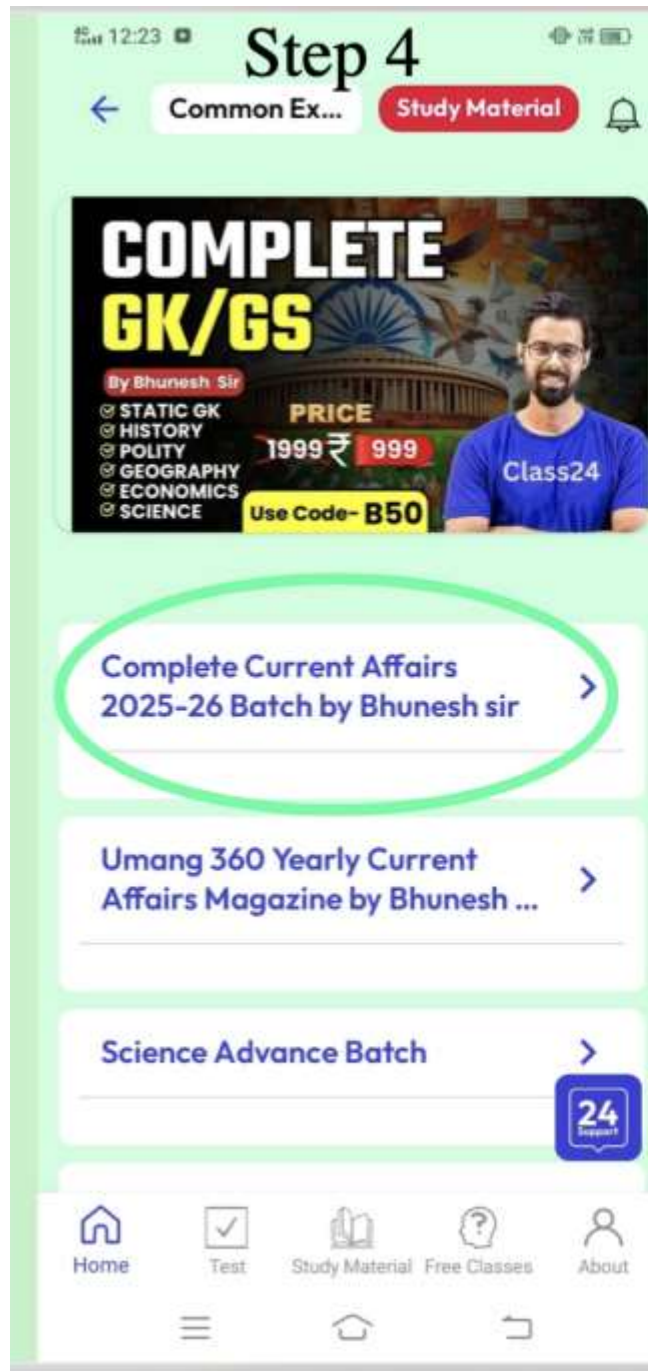
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“Read today not to beat others, but
to become the version of yourself
that tomorrow demands.”

COUNTER-TERROR CAPABILITIES
Shah calls for analysis of terror incidents
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Locals upset as several tourist sites remain shut
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SERIES DEALER
Women in Blue get the better of Sri Lanka
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INSIDE



U.S. launches air strike against IS forces in Nigeria

WEST PALM BEACH
U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday that the U.S. launched air strikes against Islamic State (IS) forces in Nigeria, after spending weeks accusing the country of not stopping the persecution of Christians. > PAGE 15

CBI moves SC after MLA gets bail in rape case

NEW DELHI
Days after the Delhi High Court gave conditional bail to former BJP MLA Rakesh Singh Sengar, convicted in the Unnao rape case, the CBI filed a special leave petition before the Supreme Court on Friday. The move comes amid continuing protests. > PAGE 9

Two BJP workers killed in West Bengal, six held

KOLKATA
Two BJP workers were killed in a police firing in West Bengal on Thursday. BJP leaders called it a targeted political attack. However, local Trinamool Congress leaders blamed it on an internal family feud. Six persons have been arrested. > PAGE 4

Prevent attacks on Christians, churches to govt.

NEW DELHI
The National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) on Friday appealed to the Government of India to take strong action against those attacking Christians, their places of worship, and traditional religious symbols. > PAGE 8

India flags attacks on minorities in Bangladesh

External Affairs Ministry condemns the killing of Dipu Chandra Das in Mymensingh city

Reports claiming over 2,900 incidents of violence against minorities can't be brushed aside, it says

New Delhi reiterates call for inclusive election, indicating opposition to barring any political party

Katol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

India on Friday said that more than 2,900 violent incidents targeting minority communities had taken place in Bangladesh under the interim government led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed, and that these incidents could not be dismissed as "political violence" or "media exaggeration".

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randeep Jaiswal condemned the killing of Dipu Chandra Das in Mymensingh city and reiterated India's call for holding an "inclusive" election, including its opposition to excluding any political party from participating in the upcoming election.

"The alarming hostility against minorities in Bangladesh, including Hindus, Christians, and Buddhists, at the hands of extremists is a matter of grave concern. We condemn the recent gruesome killing of a Hindu youth and expect that the perpetrators of the crime would be brought to justice," he said in the weekly briefing of the Ministry.

Minorities targeted
The remarks came in response to a number of questions on the recent spurt in violence against the minority Hindu community in Bangladesh, especially after the death of Islamist leader Sharif Osman Hadi on December 18. In the aftermath of Hadi's death, election, leading to its opposition to excluding any political party from participating in the upcoming election.

"The alarming hostility against minorities in Bangladesh, including Hindus, Christians, and Buddhists, at the hands of extremists is a matter of grave concern. We condemn the recent gruesome killing of a Hindu youth and expect that the perpetrators of the crime would be brought to justice," he said in the weekly briefing of the Ministry.



Keeling together: Hindu youth in Bangladesh protest, in Phayaghi on Friday over the killing of a Hindu youth in Bangladesh. (1)

also cited the reports published by the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council and other independent organisations and said, "Over 2,900 incidents of violence against minorities, including cases of killings, arson, land grab, have been documented by independent sources during the tenure of the interim government."

"These incidents cannot be brushed aside as mere media exaggerations or

dismissed as political violence," he added.

"Responsibility of govt."
He reminded Dhaka that India, to act "responsibly" by ceasing its support for Sheikh Hasina and other

possibility of the government" of Bangladesh.

The violence against minorities triggered a diplomatic confrontation between Dhaka and New Delhi after protesters targeted India's missions and visa centres in Bangladesh, alleging that the killers of Hadi too had fled to India like the leaders of the Awami League.

In this regard, Mr. Jaiswal said India rejected the "false narrative" that had been circulated in Bangladesh.

Earlier, Bangladesh had also summoned India's envoy Pranay Varma after protests were held outside its missions in Dhaka, Kolkata, Agartala and visa centre in Silguri.

Responding to a question on Bangladesh's leading daily Prothom Alo calling upon India to act "responsibly" by ceasing its support for Sheikh Hasina and other

leaders of the Awami League who are allegedly operating from the Indian territory, Mr. Jaiswal did not clarify whether India would recognise the upcoming election as genuine as it will exclude the Awami League but reiterated India's resolve to strengthen ties with the "people of Bangladesh".

He further said New Delhi will support "free, fair, inclusive and participatory elections in Bangladesh".

"Free, fair elections"

He also responded to the massive welcome that the acting chairman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party Tarik Rahman received in Dhaka on his return from London after prolonged exile, saying Mr. Rahman's return "must be seen within the context of India's support for free, fair and inclusive elections in Bangladesh".

Annual rings



Tree of life: The century-old, 80-foot rain tree at Vell Malai in Fort Kochi, Kerala, is decorated with stars on Friday as part of the Christmas and New Year celebrations. Over the years, the tree has become an iconic image. (Anand Kishore)

Centre raises H-IB interview cancellation issue with U.S.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India on Friday said it had expressed its concern to the U.S. over the mass cancellation of scheduled H-1B visa interviews of Indian applicants and that it was "actively engaged with the U.S. side to minimise the disruptions caused to our nationals".

The interviews of thousands of H-1B visa applicants scheduled in the middle of December have been abruptly postponed by several months to scrutinise their social media posts and online profiles. Some of the applicants, who were scheduled last week, received mails from U.S. immigration authorities in-



RANDEEP JAISWAL
External Affairs Ministry spokesperson

forming them that their interviews are being pushed back to May. The government has received several representations from Indian nationals facing problems with rescheduling of visa appointments, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randeep Jaiswal said at a media briefing.

Visa-related issues pertain to the sovereign dis-

The Government of India remains actively engaged with the U.S. side to minimise the disruptions caused to our nationals.

main of any country, he said. "We have flagged these issues and are committed to the U.S. side, both here in New Delhi and in Washington, D.C.," he said.

The U.S. move has resulted in significant delays for the visa applicants in their return to the U.S. The handling Jaiswal said at a media briefing.

Centre's experts had failed to define Aravallis for over a year before SC warning

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The assignment was to define the Aravallis, an ancient range of weathered hills rambling across four States, from the outskirts of Delhi to Gujarat. Despite three committees labouring over the task for over a year, armed with satellite imagery and expertise from multiple institutions, the Centre could not decide on uniform technical criteria to define the range. It was only after the Supreme Court warned of instituting contempt proceedings against officials of the Environment Ministry that a new sub-committee was formed in August 2023, which then gave up trying to define the Aravallis and focused instead on evolving a definition that would

"balance" ecological consideration and the Centre's commercial activities. Environment Minister Bhupendra Patel has stressed that no new mining licences would be awarded until a detailed Management Plan for Sustainable Mining (MPSM) covering the entire Aravalli range is prepared by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education. In 2024, the Centre decided on a uniform definition for the Aravalli hills, the Supreme Court constituted a Committee, comprising representatives from the Environment Ministry, the Forest Survey of India, State Forest Departments, the Geological Survey of India and the Central Bureau of Forestry. The committee was to define the Aravalli hills in Rajasthan, based on the slope — and

mining and degradation. Under fire from environmental activists, Environment Minister Bhupendra Patel has stressed that no new mining licences would be awarded until a detailed Management Plan for Sustainable Mining (MPSM) covering the entire Aravalli range is prepared by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education. In 2024, the Centre decided on a uniform definition for the Aravalli hills, the Supreme Court constituted a Committee, comprising representatives from the Environment Ministry, the Forest Survey of India, State Forest Departments, the Geological Survey of India and the Central Bureau of Forestry. The committee was to define the Aravalli hills in Rajasthan, based on the slope — and



Self-appointing: People take part in a 'Save Aravalli' demonstration in Jaipur earlier this week. (1)

Importantly, not on the height — the Committee was quite concerned that areas that were "not Aravalli" not be included. "It is again reiterated that using only elevation and slope as criteria to demarcate the boundary of the Aravalli hills and Rajasthan may lead to inclusion errors, as a significant part of

Hilly area fall within the identified districts is non-Aravalli. In plain terms, not all areas of Aravalli have Hilly terrain and not all Hilly terrain is Aravalli. The districts are necessarily Aravalli in terms of its geological profile and extent," the panel noted.

The survey committee of the main Committee, chaired by the Director General of the FSI, and including representatives from the Forest Survey of India and the Geological Survey of India, in 2024 started on an exercise to define the 'hills' for all of the Aravallis beyond Rajasthan.

Slope and local relief
The exercise for the first time relied on standard relief-shaded maps prepared by the Survey of India. Even the FSI, the records show, concurred that the slope was not the sole determining criteria.

"The Survey of India (SoI) and the Forest Survey of India (FSI) were not in agreement with the approach of hard-based solely on slope and local relief," a report of the Committee noted. They emphasised that other local and regional morphological parameters, may also need to be considered. In its report, the Committee cited "significant potential for critical minerals" and stressed the need for a framework that enables systematic, scientific and environmentally sustainable exploitation of critical, strategic, and atomic minerals within the region."

from May 2025 to August 2025, these experts could not agree on a uniform definition. On August 12, 2023, the Supreme Court warned of contempt of court proceedings against the members of the Committee over delay.

It was following this that the Committee started to focus on getting the views of States and getting a definition that would support sustainable mining. In its report, the Committee cited "significant potential for critical minerals" and stressed the need for a framework that enables systematic, scientific and environmentally sustainable exploitation of critical, strategic, and atomic minerals within the region."

Centre's experts had failed to define Aravallis for over a year before SC warning

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The assignment was to define the Aravallis, an ancient range of weathered hills rambling across four States, from the outskirts of Delhi to Gujarat. Despite three committees labouring over the task for over a year, armed with satellite imagery and expertise from multiple institutions, the Centre could not decide on uniform technical criteria to define the range.

It was only after the Supreme Court warned of initiating contempt proceedings against officials of the Environment Ministry that a new sub-committee was formed in August 2025, which then gave up trying to define the Aravallis and focused instead on evolving a definition that would

"balance" ecological consideration and the Centre's 2019 National Mineral Policy that encourages mining of critical minerals for the "nation's economic growth", according to a 2,000-page affidavit by the Ministry, submitted to the Supreme Court, which was perused by *The Hindu*.

The definition of the range has sparked an environmental and political row over the last week, with charges that the final definition only protects hills higher than 100 metres from mining.

Danger of mining

That leaves the remaining hills – which make up the vast majority of the 700 km range spanning from Haryana to Gujarat, with the bulk of it in Rajasthan – open to the dangers of

mining and degradation.

Under fire from environmental activists, Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav has stressed that no new mining licences would be awarded until a detailed Management Plan for Sustainable Mining (MPSM) covering the entire Aravalli range is prepared by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education.

In 2024, help decide on a uniform definition for the Aravalli hills, the Supreme Court constituted a Committee, comprising representatives from the Environment Ministry, the Forest Survey of India, State Forest Departments, the Geological Survey of India and the Central Empowered Committee of the SC. After constituting two sub-committees of its own, and facing a rap from the



Safeguarding nature: People take part in a 'Save Aravalli' demonstration in Jaipur earlier this week. PTI

top court, the Committee finally submitted its findings in October 2025, after which the SC passed an order on November 20.

Perusal of the Committee's documents showed that while the Forest Survey of India in 2010 had a criterion for defining the Aravalli hills in Rajasthan, based on the slope – and

importantly, not on the height – the Committee was quite concerned that areas that were "not Aravalli" not be included.

"It is again reiterated that using only elevation and slope as criteria to demarcate the boundary of the Aravalli Hills and Ranges may lead to inclusion errors, as a significant part of

Hilly area fall within the identified districts is non-Aravalli. In plain terms, not all areas of Aravalli have Hilly terrain and not all Hilly terrain in these 34 districts are necessarily Aravalli in terms of its Geological profile and extent," the panel noted.

A technical sub-committee of the main Committee, chaired by the Director General of the FSI, and including representatives from the Survey of India and the Geological Survey of India, in 2024 started on an exercise to define the 'hills' for all of the Aravallis beyond Rajasthan.

Slope and local relief

This exercise for the first time relied on standard resolution-maps prepared by the Survey of India. Even the FSI, the records show,

concurred that the slope was not the sole determining criteria.

"The Survey of India (SoI) and the Forest Survey of India (FSI) were not in agreement with the approach of hard... based solely on slope and local relief," a report of the Committee noted. "They emphasised that other local and regional morphometric parameters may also need to be considered. Since the nature of Hills varies across different terrains, it may not be practical to apply uniform criteria of slope and relief across the entire region. This observation was further substantiated during the detailed slope and relief-based analysis carried out by the Technical Sub-Committee."

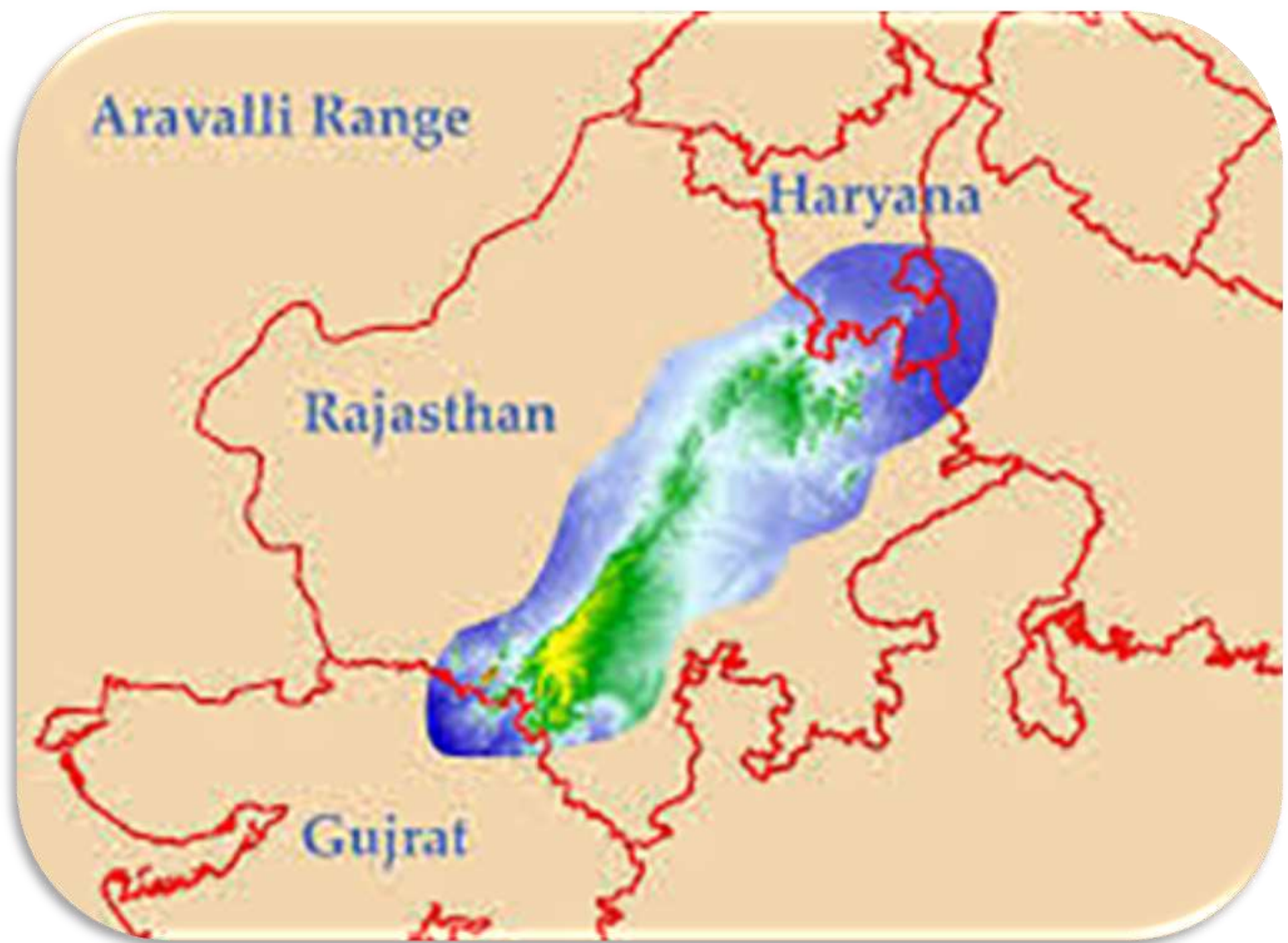
Despite six meetings

from May 2025 to August 2025, these experts could not agree on a uniform definition. On August 12, 2025, the Supreme Court warned of contempt of court proceedings against the members of the Committee over delay.

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CONG. STEPS UP PROTESTS

» PAGE 2





INDIA

Mountain Ranges



*Map not to be scale

● Issue at a Glance | मुद्दे का सार

- Centre failed to define the Aravalli range uniformly for over a year, despite multiple expert committees.

केंद्र सरकार एक वर्ष से अधिक समय तक अरावली पर्वतमाला की एकरूप परिभाषा तय करने में असफल रही।

- Supreme Court intervened and warned of contempt, pushing the Centre to act.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने अवमानना की चेतावनी दी, जिसके बाद केंद्र सक्रिय हुआ।

- New definition focuses heavily on elevation (100 m) and slope, raising fears of large-scale exclusion.

नई परिभाषा मुख्यतः ऊँचाई (100 मीटर) और ढाल पर आधारित है, जिससे बड़े पैमाने पर बहिष्करण की आशंका है।

Key Findings of the Committee | समिति की प्रमुख बातें

1. Delay & Confusion

- Three committees worked for over a year but **could not agree on technical criteria.**

तीन समितियाँ एक साल से अधिक समय तक काम करती रहीं लेकिन तकनीकी मानदंडों पर सहमति नहीं बनी।

- Survey of India (Sol) and Forest Survey of India (FSI) **disagreed** on slope-based criteria.

सर्वे ऑफ इंडिया और फॉरेस्ट सर्वे ऑफ इंडिया ढाल आधारित मानदंडों पर सहमत नहीं थे।

2. New Definition Problem

- Aravalli defined as land above 100 m from local relief, not height alone.
अरावली को स्थानीय धरातल से 100 मीटर ऊँचाई वाले भू-भाग के रूप में परिभाषित किया गया।
 - 1.18 lakh hills below 100 m risk exclusion, leaving nearly 90% area unprotected.
100 मीटर से नीचे की 1.18 लाख पहाड़ियाँ संरक्षण से बाहर हो सकती हैं।
-

3. Mining & Environmental Risk

- Lower hills form the majority of Aravallis, especially in Rajasthan.
निचली पहाड़ियाँ अरावली का बड़ा हिस्सा हैं, विशेषकर राजस्थान में।
 - Exclusion opens them to mining, deforestation, and land degradation.
इससे खनन, वनों की कटाई और भूमि क्षरण का खतरा बढ़ेगा।
-

Geographical Significance | भौगोलिक महत्व

- One of the world's oldest fold mountains (≈ 1.5 –2 billion years old).
विश्व की सबसे प्राचीन पर्वत श्रृंखलाओं में से एक (लगभग 1.5–2 अरब वर्ष पुरानी)।
- Extends from Delhi–Haryana–Rajasthan to Gujarat (~700 km).
दिल्ली-हरियाणा-राजस्थान से गुजरात तक लगभग 700 किमी फैली हुई।
- Acts as a barrier preventing Thar Desert expansion eastward.
थार मरुस्थल के पूर्व की ओर फैलाव को रोकती है।

Ecological Importance | पारिस्थितिक महत्व

- Natural shield against desertification, dust storms, and air pollution.
मरुस्थलीकरण, धूल भरी आँधियों और वायु प्रदूषण से प्राकृतिक सुरक्षा।
 - Crucial for groundwater recharge in Rajasthan, Haryana, and Delhi-NCR.
राजस्थान, हरियाणा और दिल्ली-एनसीआर में भूजल पुनर्भरण के लिए अत्यंत आवश्यक।
 - Hosts tropical dry deciduous forests and biodiversity corridors.
शुष्क पर्णपाती वन एवं जैव विविधता गलियारे।
-

Political Dimension | राजनीतिक पक्ष

- Sachin Pilot and Congress leaders protested, warning desert may reach Delhi.
सचिन पायलट व कांग्रेस नेताओं ने चेतावनी दी कि रेगिस्तान दिल्ली तक आ सकता है।
 - Government accused of redefining Aravallis to facilitate mining.
सरकार पर खनन को बढ़ावा देने के लिए परिभाषा बदलने का आरोप।
 - Centre argues protection continues via Mining Management Plans (MPSM).
केंद्र का तर्क है कि सतत खनन प्रबंधन योजना के तहत सुरक्षा जारी रहेगी।
-

Economic Angle | आर्थिक पक्ष

- Aravallis contain critical and strategic minerals.
अरावली में महत्वपूर्ण और रणनीतिक खनिज पाए जाते हैं।
- Tension between economic growth vs ecological sustainability.
आर्थिक विकास और पर्यावरण संरक्षण के बीच टकराव।
- Unregulated mining increases long-term environmental and health costs.
अनियंत्रित खनन से दीर्घकालिक पर्यावरण व स्वास्थ्य लागत बढ़ती है।

Q. With reference to the Aravalli Hills controversy, consider the following statements:

अरावली विवाद के संदर्भ में निम्न कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:

1. The new definition relies only on absolute height above sea level.
नई परिभाषा केवल समुद्र तल से ऊँचाई पर आधारित है।
2. Aravallis act as a natural barrier against the expansion of the Thar Desert.
अरावली थार मरुस्थल के विस्तार को रोकने वाली प्राकृतिक दीवार है।
3. Excluding hills below 100 m could expose a majority of Aravalli area to mining.
100 मीटर से कम पहाड़ियों को बाहर करने से अधिकांश अरावली क्षेत्र खनन के लिए खुल सकता है।

Which of the above statements are correct?

सही कथन कौन-से हैं?

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

IN BRIEF



Indian student shot dead near University of Toronto campus

A 20-year-old Indian doctoral student has been shot dead near the University of Toronto Scarborough campus (UTSC) in Canada, with authorities probing the case as a homicide, officials said. The shooting took place on December 23, and the Toronto police on December 24 identified the victim as Shivank Awasthi, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reported. The police were called to the area of Highland Creek Trail and Old Kingston Road at about 3.30 p.m. on Tuesday for a report of an injured person lying on the ground, said Duty Inspector Jeff Allington. —

Woman shot at in Gurugram for rejecting proposal

A 25-year-old woman was shot at inside a club in Gurugram after she allegedly refused a proposal from a man, the police said on Thursday. The police said they had received information about a woman injured in firing and found her admitted to a private hospital. The woman's husband lodged a complaint stating that his wife, Kalpana, 25, was shot by Tushar, alias Jony, 25, a resident of Sangam Vihar in Delhi. He said that Kalpana had gone to work on December 19 and around 1 a.m., called him to say she had been shot. After investigation, the police arrested two accused, Tushar and his friend Shubham, alias Jony, 24, both residents of Sangam Vihar. —

CEO among three arrested for gang rape of woman

Press Trust of India
JAIPUR

Three people, including the CEO of a private IT company, have been arrested for the alleged gang rape of a woman manager of the company after a birthday party in Udaipur, Rajasthan, the police said on Friday.

According to the police, the accused CEO, Jyoti Sinha, had organised a party on his birthday last Saturday, in which the manager was also a guest. The other accused in the case were a woman executive head of the company and her husband Gaurav Sinha of Meerut.

All three accused were arrested on Thursday and produced before a court, which remanded them in four-day police custody.

According to the woman's complaint, after the party, she was offered to be dropped back home by the CEO, who was sitting in her car, in which Sinha and Sinha were also seated. On the way, they allegedly bought a cigarette-like substance and offered her, after which she lost consciousness. She later woke up and found the CEO and his friend had been sexually assaulting her, the complaint said.

HC seeks Centre's reply on plea to cut GST on air purifiers

COURT GRANTS 10 DAYS TO FILE AFFIDAVIT AMID CONCERNS OVER THE AIR QUALITY IN DELHI. PIL PLAIS ASKS PURIFIERS MUST BE CLASSIFIED AS 'MEDICAL DEVICES'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday directed the Centre to submit a detailed affidavit on a petition filed by a group of citizens seeking a reduction in the goods and services tax on air purifiers in view of the worsening air quality in the national capital.

A Vacation Bench of Justice Vikram Mahajan and Justice Vinod Kumar granted the Centre 10 days to file its reply to the petition, while posting the case for further hearing on January 9.

During the hearing, Additional Solicitor-General N. Venkataraman, representing the Centre, stated that meetings of the GST Council had to be held physically and that it was not possible to convene such meetings through video conferencing.

The AGS further highlighted that the GST Council was a constitutional body and that the Centre had to do its duty in person. He sought time to submit a de-



Taxed air: The PIL pleads the Centre to bring the goods and services tax from 18% to 5% on air purifiers. (1/5 PHOTO)

tailed affidavit from the government in response to the petition.

The public interest litigation petition filed by advocate Kapil Madan sought directions to the Centre to classify air purifiers as 'medical devices' and reduce the goods and services tax to the 5% slab. Air purifiers are currently taxed at 18%. The petition stated that purifiers cannot

be treated as luxury items in view of the 'extreme emergency crisis' caused by air pollution in Delhi. On December 24, the Centre directed the GST Council to meet at the earliest and consider lowering or abolishing GST on air purifiers.

The matter was listed on Friday to inform the court when the Council could meet and whether it was possible for it to convene virtually, if not physically.

Church body seeks action against those attacking Christians

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) on Friday halted the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Cathedral Church of the Redemption in New Delhi on Christmas. The organisation also appealed to the Government of India to take strong action against those attacking Christians, their places of worship, and traditional religious symbols.

Rev. Asit Eberwein, general secretary, NCCI, in a statement, said that the Prime Minister's visit to the church, particularly at a time when attacks on Christians were reported from various places of the country, could be perceived as a reassuring signal to the community.

"It can suggest that the Government of the day and the political leadership of the National Democratic Alliance Government stand with the Christian community of India. While welcoming this gesture by the PM, NCCI places on record its deepest earnest appeal to the Government of India and its NDA allies to unequivocally distance themselves from acts of violence and

Four held for vandalism in Assam school

Four people associated with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Bhupen Baruah were arrested for vandalising decorative items at a school on Christmas eve and damaging festive articles in shops in Assam's Nalbari district, the police said. The arrests were made on Thursday, a senior officer said. —

intimidation perpetrated by ill-informed miscreants," the statement read.

The organisation also called upon the government to condemn attacks on Christians in the strongest possible terms and take stringent action against those responsible for the attacks. It added that actions against those attacking the Christians would ensure that the goodwill gesture extended by the PM on Christmas Day, and by other representatives of the ruling dispensation on various occasions, were seen as meaningful commitments rather than symbolic appearances.

Invasive mosquito species threatens India's 2030 malaria elimination goal

Hindu Bhawan Varanasi
NEW DELHI

Urban malaria, driven largely by the spread of the invasive vector *Anopheles stephensi* in metropolitan areas such as Delhi, has emerged as a national concern threatening India's goal of eliminating the mosquito-borne disease by 2030, according to the Health Ministry's recently released "Malaria situation technical report, 2023".

The report said asymptomatic infections, difficult terrain, and population movement continued to drive transmission, while high-burden pockets persisted in the districts of Odisha, Tripura, and Mizoram. Cross-border transmission from Myanmar and Bangladesh continued to affect border districts in northeastern India.

Besides the malaria

worldwide, in India, urban transmission prevents unique challenges related to container breeding, construction sites, informal settlements, high population density and fragmented healthcare delivery, necessitating city-specific vector control and surveillance strategies.

"Strengthening surveillance systems, enhancing vector monitoring and improving supply chain reliability emerged as the top priorities," the report noted.

High-burden pockets
While India has now largely entered the pre-elimination phase, malaria is no longer uniformly distributed across large geographical areas, the report said. Instead, the disease persists in limited, urbanised pockets, often shaped by local ecological conditions, human mobility, occupational exposure, health-system access, and

vector dynamics. The report added that active surveillance has been intensified in tribal and forest areas, border regions, and migratory population settings, where residual transmission risks remain high.

Drop in cases
India has reduced its malaria burden significantly over the past decade, and the number of cases has dropped from 12.7 lakh in 2019 to around 2.27 lakh in 2023, with deaths reducing by 78%. Key challenges that need urgent attention include inconsistent private-sector reporting, limited entomological capacity, drug and insecticide resistance, operational gaps in remote tribal areas, and sporadic shortages of diagnostics and treatment commodities.

Operational research has emerged as a key enabler for elimination acceleration, the report said.

UIDAI to expand full-service Aadhaar centres to 473 by September: CEO

ASSAM BUREAU
NEW DELHI

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) will increase the number of full-service Aadhaar enrolment and update centres for adults to 473 from the current 387 by September 2026, its CEO, Bhupesh Kumar, told *The Hindu*.

While children can be enrolled for Aadhaar at any centre, adults enrollees have fewer places to go.

Since adult applicants may have to travel past multiple districts to reach a centre, the expansion will help them, Mr. Kumar said. Each centre offers all modernisation and enrolment services. Some Aadhaar details can be updated online, but changes in biometric data and linking to a new name after a certain limit require a visit to a centre. Mr. Kumar said the UIDAI wants to ensure that



UIDAI CEO says parents who withhold their children's date of birth during Aadhaar enrolment risk criminal action. (1/5 PHOTO)

there is at least one centre in two districts. The number of adult enrollees is likely a small percentage of Indians the precise share cannot be calculated due to the lack of a nationwide Census since 2011, but even a small percentage could mean millions of people due to India's population. "We are working with Google and we will soon have Google locations for Aadhaar centres," Mr. Kumar said.

Field verification
Mr. Kumar said that due to concerns of illegal immigration, Aadhaar has been issued in recent months only after field verification by district administration. Most adult applicants include non-resident Indians or overseas citizens of India, the latter being foreign nationals with

ties to India either by marriage or parentage. Foreign nationals who live in India are permitted to have an Aadhaar as it is not a proof of citizenship.

The UIDAI is working on the history of data by restricting changes in date of birth of Aadhaar holders. "If someone has two different dates of birth in two different documents, one is false," Mr. Kumar said. People who had to change the date of birth once will be allowed to do so after filing an affidavit admitting a clerical mistake but doing so twice will not be allowed, he said.

Parents who falsified their children's date of birth during Aadhaar enrolment risk criminal action, Mr. Kumar said, referring to a case in which the Allahabad High Court ordered the filing of an FIR against a parent over irregularity surrounding a child's date of birth.

THE CROSSWORD

14676

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at: <https://www.india.com/crossword/>

(Set by Dr. R)

16 One collecting hard puzzle on a beach (7)

17 Upriser in trial involving sexual politicians (5)

18 Eco-friend associate tackling good boy's recurrent neurological disorder (7)

19 Step towards crossing time (4)

20 Pop a capsule to gain power and energy? Monks' (5,5)

21 Director's explanation about year with ultimately horrendous period of low rainfall (1,6)

22 Individual, terror about season's first outbreak (5)

23 Unconventional error by doctor ultimately worsened future in part (1,3)

24 One about retreat getting poor rating, perhaps (3,4)

25 One's old dream struggling without money is not educated (10)

26 Woody plant or both? Perhaps! About right (6)

27 Asian cat wandering around pink Spanish region (8)

28 Lady getting excellent thing (4)

29 See 15 Across

30 Intoxicated prince irritated soprano (4,7)

31 Spy rebellious teenagers consuming cocaine near bar (9,3)

32 One surprising key player featuring in a spot near restaurant in retreat (5,3)

33 Accepted suggestion to have new wine and Italian appetizer (8)

34 Start to make film about a city in Iran (7)

35 In an ordinary pasteurized about right (6)

36 Sweet leader accepted by revolutionary even in election (5)

37 Live with a push boyfriend (4)

Across

1. Dynamic guitar surely has good collection of mugs (10,7)

2. One's eyes to release intensity (5)

3. Role of India's top detective inspector caught breaking laws (8)

4,17. Asian folkloric player will do to make the first move (1,4,4,7)

12. Chemical element extracted from waste in refinery (8)

14. Made for each dad and got at center (7)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

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

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

His decision is supreme

The Supreme One takes pity on *frustrated* (living beings), and gives them a body, according to their karma. We must use the body to worship Him. Our hands must be used to offer *anjali* to Him. *Anjali* (greeting palms together in prayer) is praised as the most important gesture of worship, said Akkarakanni Srinidhi in a discourse.

On the greatness of *anjali*, it has been said, "anjalihi parama mudra" *Krishna dev prasad*. "Then, *anjali* is the best mudra. But what does *anjali* mean? *Anjali* is defined thus - *am jalayathi anjali*. The *akshara* 'a' is a reference to Vishnu, for it is said - *ahurkrt Vishnuh*, but saying 'a' is like saying the Lord's name. His heart melts (*jalayathi*) if his devotees do an *anjali*. If *anjali* is such an easy means of obtaining His mercy, then why did we not do it in our previous birth? Our presence on this earth now shows we did not resort to such an easy means of reaching Him. From this, it becomes clear that even to do something so simple, He must will it. The *Sampradaya* clearly demonstrates this. Dasaratna wanted Rama to succeed him as king. Kaikeyi wanted her son Bharata to become the king. Bharata himself wanted Rama to return to Ayodhya and ascend the throne. But were the wishes of any of these people fulfilled? Rama went to the forest, and thus Dasaratna's wish was not met, Bharata refused to accept kingship, and so Kaikeyi's desire was not fulfilled. Bharata pleaded with Rama to return to Ayodhya and become the king, but Rama refused. Eventually, it was Rama's sandals that ascended the throne. Thus only what the Lord decides will happen. That is why we must pray to Him to give us the sense to do even an *anjali*. We cannot do it on our own.

Invasive mosquito species threatens India's 2030 malaria elimination goal

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Urban malaria, driven largely by the spread of the invasive vector *Anopheles stephensi* in metropolitan areas such as Delhi, has emerged as a national concern threatening India's goal of eliminating the mosquito-borne disease by 2030, according to the Health Ministry's recently released "Malaria elimination technical report, 2025".

The report said asymptomatic infections, difficult terrain, and population movement continued to drive transmission, while high-burden pockets persisted in the districts of Odisha, Tripura, and Mizoram. Cross-border transmission from Myanmar and Bangladesh continued to affect border districts in northeastern India.

Besides the malaria



India's malaria cases fell from 11.7 lakh in 2015 to about 2.27 lakh in 2024.

elimination goal, the country has assigned itself an intermediate goal of achieving zero indigenous cases by 2027, aligning with the World Health Organization's global strategy.

Anopheles stephensi is a mosquito species, now recognised as an invasive threat due to its ability to thrive in urban environments, that breed in artificial containers (tanks, tyres), and efficiently transmit the *Plasmodium falciparum* and *P. vivax* parasites, challenging current malaria control efforts

worldwide. In India, urban transmission presents unique challenges related to container breeding, construction sites, informal settings, high population density and fragmented healthcare delivery, necessitating city-specific vector control and surveillance strategies.

"Strengthening surveillance systems, enhancing vector monitoring and improving supply chain reliability emerged as the top priorities," the report noted.

High-burden pockets

While India has now largely entered the pre-elimination phase, malaria is no longer uniformly distributed across large geographical areas, the report said. Instead, the disease persists in limited pockets shaped by local ecological conditions, human mobility, occupational exposure, health-system access, and

vector dynamics. The report added that active surveillance has been intensified in tribal and forest areas, border regions, and migratory population settings, where residual transmission risks remain high.

Drop in cases

India has reduced its malaria burden significantly over the past decade, and the number of cases has dropped from 11.7 lakh in 2015 to around 2.27 lakh in 2024, with deaths reducing by 78%. Key challenges that need urgent attention include inconsistent private-sector reporting, limited entomological capacity, drug and insecticide resistance, operational gaps in remote tribal areas, and sporadic shortages of diagnostics and treatment commodities.

Operational research has emerged as a key enabler for elimination acceleration, the report said.



Did You Know?



247 M

New cases of malaria in **2021**



95%

Malaria cases in **WHO African region**



6,19,000

Malaria-related deaths in **2021**



Symptoms



High Fever



Diarrhoea



Chills



Muscle Pain



Headaches



Nausea & Vomiting



Sweating



Dry Cough

What should you keep in mind?

M



Make people aware of symptoms

A

Always use mosquito nets

L

Long sleeve clothes- Go for protective clothing

A



Apply Mosquito repellents

R

Remove Standing Water

I

Implementing and accepting GOI guidelines against malaria

A

Avoid travelling to areas with a malaria outbreak

- GM mosquitoes have been successfully **used in parts of Brazil**, the Cayman Islands, Panama, and India to control ***Aedes aegypti mosquitoes***. Since 2019, over 1 billion mosquitoes have been released.
- Djibouti's initiative follows **Burkina Faso's release of GM mosquitoes in West Africa**, highlighting a growing trend in using biotechnology to combat malaria.

Malaria

- **Malaria** is a life-threatening disease caused by the ***Plasmodium parasite***, transmitted through the bites of infected **female Anopheles mosquitoes**.
- It is most **common in tropical and subtropical regions**, with symptoms including fever, chills, headache, and fatigue. Severe cases can lead to organ failure, coma, and death.
- India is implementing various initiatives to control vector-borne diseases, particularly malaria. These efforts include the **National Vector-Borne Disease Control Programme, the National Malaria Control Programme, the National Framework for Malaria Elimination 2016-2030.**

- **Types:**

- **Four types of Parasites** can infect humans: Plasmodium Vivax, P. ovale, P. malariae and P. falciparum.

- **Indian Scenario:**

- India carries **2% of the global malaria** case burden and **2% of global malaria deaths**.
 - India also bears **85.2%** of the malaria burden in **South East Asia**.
- India carries **47% of the global P. vivax malaria burden**, making the country strategically important for **global malaria elimination**, particularly in the South-East Asian region, on the other hand **India** is the only high endemic country which has **reported a decline of 17.6% in 2019 as compared to 2018**.

- **Related Initiatives:**

- **National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination (2017-22)**.
- **National Framework for Malaria Elimination**.



Core Issue | मूल मुद्दा

- An invasive mosquito species is threatening India's goal of eliminating malaria by 2030.
एक आक्रामक मच्छर प्रजाति भारत के 2030 तक मलेरिया उन्मूलन लक्ष्य के लिए खतरा बन रही है।
 - Urban malaria is rising due to the spread of *Anopheles stephensi* in cities like Delhi.
दिल्ली जैसे महानगरों में एनोफिलीज स्टीफेंसी के कारण शहरी मलेरिया बढ़ रहा है।
-



About the Invasive Species | आक्रामक मच्छर के बारे में

- *Anopheles stephensi* is now recognised as an invasive vector in India.
एनोफिलीज स्टीफेंसी को भारत में एक आक्रामक वाहक (vector) माना गया है।
 - It thrives in urban environments and breeds in artificial water containers.
यह शहरी वातावरण में पनपता है और कृत्रिम जल-स्रोतों में प्रजनन करता है।
 - Common breeding sites include tanks, overhead reservoirs, tyres, and construction sites.
टंकी, ओवरहेड टैंक, टायर और निर्माण स्थल इसके प्रमुख प्रजनन स्थल हैं।
 - It efficiently transmits *Plasmodium falciparum* and *Plasmodium vivax*.
यह प्लाज्मोडियम फाल्सीपेरम और प्लाज्मोडियम विवैक्स को प्रभावी ढंग से फैलाता है।
-

India's Malaria Elimination Targets | भारत का लक्ष्य

- India aims to eliminate malaria by 2030.
भारत का लक्ष्य 2030 तक मलेरिया उन्मूलन है।
 - Intermediate target: zero indigenous malaria cases by 2027.
मध्यवर्ती लक्ष्य: 2027 तक स्वदेशी (स्थानीय) मलेरिया मामलों को शून्य करना।
 - These targets align with WHO's Global Technical Strategy for Malaria.
ये लक्ष्य WHO की वैश्विक मलेरिया रणनीति के अनुरूप हैं।
-

Progress So Far | अब तक की प्रगति

- Malaria cases declined from 11.7 lakh (2015) to about 2.27 lakh (2024).
मलेरिया के मामले 2015 में 11.7 लाख से घटकर 2024 में लगभग 2.27 लाख हो गए।
 - Malaria-related deaths reduced by nearly 78%.
मलेरिया से होने वाली मौतों में लगभग 78% की कमी आई है।
-

Geographic & Regional Challenges | भौगोलिक चुनौतियाँ

- Urban areas face unique risks due to high population density and construction activity.
शहरी क्षेत्रों में अधिक जनसंख्या घनत्व और निर्माण गतिविधियों से जोखिम बढ़ता है।
- High-burden pockets persist in Odisha, Tripura, and Mizoram.
ओडिशा, त्रिपुरा और मिजोरम में उच्च संक्रमण वाले क्षेत्र बने हुए हैं।
- Cross-border transmission continues from Myanmar and Bangladesh.
म्यांमार और बांग्लादेश से सीमा-पार संक्रमण जारी है।
- Residual transmission remains high in tribal, forest, and migratory regions.
जनजातीय, वन क्षेत्रों और प्रवासी आबादी में अवशिष्ट संक्रमण बना हुआ है।

Public Health & Systemic Issues | स्वास्थ्य प्रणाली की चुनौतियाँ

- Asymptomatic cases make detection difficult.
लक्षण-रहित मामलों से पहचान कठिन हो जाती है।
 - Fragmented urban healthcare systems weaken surveillance.
शहरी स्वास्थ्य व्यवस्था का विखंडन निगरानी को कमजोर करता है।
 - Private-sector reporting of malaria cases is inconsistent.
निजी क्षेत्र द्वारा मामलों की रिपोर्टिंग असंगत है।
 - Limited entomological capacity affects vector control.
कीट-विज्ञान क्षमता की कमी वेक्टर नियंत्रण को प्रभावित करती है।
-

Resistance & Operational Gaps | प्रतिरोध और संचालन समस्याएँ

- Drug resistance and insecticide resistance are emerging threats.
दवाओं और कीटनाशकों के प्रति प्रतिरोध उभरता खतरा है।
 - Diagnostic and treatment shortages occur in remote areas.
दूरस्थ क्षेत्रों में जांच और उपचार की कमी देखी जाती है।
 - Operational gaps exist in tribal and hard-to-reach regions.
जनजातीय और दुर्गम क्षेत्रों में संचालन संबंधी खामियाँ हैं।
-

Policy & Strategy Response | नीति और रणनीति

- City-specific vector control strategies are required.
शहर-विशेष वेक्टर नियंत्रण रणनीतियाँ आवश्यक हैं।
 - Surveillance and vector monitoring must be strengthened.
निगरानी और वेक्टर मॉनिटरिंग को मजबूत करना होगा।
 - Improving supply-chain reliability is a top priority.
आपूर्ति श्रृंखला की विश्वसनीयता बढ़ाना सर्वोच्च प्राथमिकता है।
 - Operational research is a key enabler for faster elimination.
संचालनात्मक शोध उन्मूलन को तेज करने का प्रमुख साधन है।
-

Historical Context | ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ

- India launched the National Malaria Control Programme in 1953.
भारत ने 1953 में राष्ट्रीय मलेरिया नियंत्रण कार्यक्रम शुरू किया।
 - It was renamed the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP).
बाद में इसे राष्ट्रीय वेक्टर जनित रोग नियंत्रण कार्यक्रम कहा गया।
 - Urban malaria has historically been harder to eliminate than rural malaria.
शहरी मलेरिया ऐतिहासिक रूप से ग्रामीण मलेरिया की तुलना में अधिक चुनौतीपूर्ण रहा है।
-

Q. With reference to *Anopheles stephensi* and malaria elimination in India, consider the following statements:

एनोफिलीज स्टीफेंसी और भारत में मलेरिया उन्मूलन के संदर्भ में निम्न कथनों पर विचार करें:

- 1. *Anopheles stephensi* primarily breeds in forested rural areas.**
एनोफिलीज स्टीफेंसी मुख्यतः वन-ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में प्रजनन करता है।
- 2. Urban malaria transmission poses challenges due to container breeding and high population density.**
कंटेनर प्रजनन और अधिक जनसंख्या घनत्व के कारण शहरी मलेरिया चुनौतीपूर्ण है।
- 3. India's malaria elimination target includes achieving zero indigenous cases by 2027.**
भारत के मलेरिया उन्मूलन लक्ष्य में 2027 तक स्वदेशी मामलों को शून्य करना शामिल है।

Which of the statements given above are correct?

उपरोक्त में से कौन-से कथन सही हैं?

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

The background features two large, overlapping, curved lines. One line is a light blue color and the other is a light green color. They are positioned in the top right and bottom left corners of the image, framing the central text.

China has opened the world's longest
expressway tunnel in Xinjiang.







RUSSIA

KAZAKHSTAN

MONGOLIA

o Urumqi

KYRGYZSTAN

XINJIANG

TAJIKISTAN

AFGHANISTAN

CHINA

INDIA

PAKISTAN

BBC NEWS

- China has opened the world's longest expressway tunnel in Xinjiang.
चीन ने शिनजियांग में दुनिया की सबसे लंबी एक्सप्रेसवे सुरंग का उद्घाटन किया है।
 - The tunnel significantly improves connectivity across difficult mountainous terrain.
यह सुरंग दुर्गम पर्वतीय क्षेत्र में संपर्क को अत्यंत बेहतर बनाती है।
-

Key Facts | प्रमुख तथ्य

- Name of tunnel: Tianshan Shengli Tunnel
सुरंग का नाम: तियानशान शेंगली टनल
- Length: 22.13 kilometres (world's longest expressway tunnel)
लंबाई: 22.13 किलोमीटर (विश्व की सबसे लंबी एक्सप्रेसवे सुरंग)
- Location: Central Tianshan Mountains, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region
स्थान: मध्य तियानशान पर्वत श्रृंखला, शिनजियांग उइगर स्वायत्त क्षेत्र
- Project developer: China Communications Construction Company (CCCC)
निर्माण एजेंसी: चाइना कम्युनिकेशंस कंस्ट्रक्शन कंपनी

Engineering & Records | इंजीनियरिंग और रिकॉर्ड

- Sets two world records
दो वैश्विक रिकॉर्ड स्थापित किए
 - Longest expressway tunnel globally
दुनिया की सबसे लंबी एक्सप्रेसवे सुरंग
 - Deepest vertical shaft ever built for a highway tunnel
हाईवे सुरंग के लिए सबसे गहरी ऊर्ध्वाधर शाफ्ट
-

Connectivity Impact | संपर्क पर प्रभाव

- Cuts travel time across the Tianshan mountains drastically
तियानशान पर्वतों के पार यात्रा समय में भारी कमी
 - Improves north–south connectivity within Xinjiang
शिनजियांग के उत्तरी-दक्षिणी हिस्सों के बीच बेहतर संपर्क
 - Ensures year-round connectivity despite harsh climatic conditions
कठोर जलवायु के बावजूद वर्षभर संपर्क सुनिश्चित
-

Strategic Infrastructure Context | रणनीतिक अवसंरचना संदर्भ

- Part of the G0711 Urumqi–Yuli Expressway
G0711 उरुमची–यूली एक्सप्रेसवे का हिस्सा
- Strengthens transport corridor in western China
पश्चिमी चीन में परिवहन गलियारे को मजबूत करता है
- Enhances logistics efficiency and regional integration
लॉजिस्टिक्स दक्षता और क्षेत्रीय एकीकरण बढ़ाता है

Geographical Significance | भौगोलिक महत्व

- Tianshan Mountains divide Xinjiang into northern and southern regions
तियानशान पर्वत शिनजियांग को उत्तरी और दक्षिणी भागों में विभाजित करते हैं
 - Region is characterised by high altitude, seismic activity, and extreme cold
यह क्षेत्र ऊँचाई, भूकंपीय गतिविधि और अत्यधिक ठंड के लिए जाना जाता है
 - Infrastructure construction here is technically very challenging
यहाँ अवसंरचना निर्माण तकनीकी रूप से अत्यंत चुनौतीपूर्ण है
-

Historical Context | ऐतिहासिक परिप्रेक्ष्य

- China has long prioritised integrating Xinjiang through transport infrastructure
चीन लंबे समय से शिनजियांग को परिवहन अवसंरचना के माध्यम से जोड़ने पर जोर देता रहा है
 - Roads, railways, pipelines and expressways have expanded rapidly since 2000s
2000 के बाद सड़कों, रेल, पाइपलाइनों और एक्सप्रेसवे का तीव्र विस्तार हुआ है
-

Political & Security Dimension | राजनीतिक एवं सुरक्षा पक्ष

- Improved connectivity strengthens administrative control in border regions
बेहतर संपर्क सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों में प्रशासनिक नियंत्रण मजबूत करता है
- Xinjiang is geopolitically sensitive due to borders with Central Asia
मध्य एशिया से लगी सीमा के कारण शिनजियांग भू-राजनीतिक रूप से संवेदनशील है
- Infrastructure aids rapid movement of goods, services, and security forces
अवसंरचना से वस्तुओं, सेवाओं और सुरक्षा बलों की तेज़ आवाजाही संभव होती है

Q. With reference to the Tianshan Shengli Tunnel, consider the following statements:

तियानशान शेंगली सुरंग के संदर्भ में निम्न कथनों पर विचार करें:

1. It is the world's longest railway tunnel.

यह दुनिया की सबसे लंबी रेलवे सुरंग है।

2. It passes through the Tianshan mountain range in Xinjiang.

यह शिनजियांग की तियानशान पर्वत श्रृंखला से होकर गुजरती है।

3. It is part of the G0711 Urumqi–Yuli Expressway.

यह G0711 उरुमची–यूली एक्सप्रेसवे का हिस्सा है।

Which of the statements given above are correct?

उपरोक्त में से कौन-से कथन सही हैं?

A. 2 and 3 only

B. 1 and 2 only

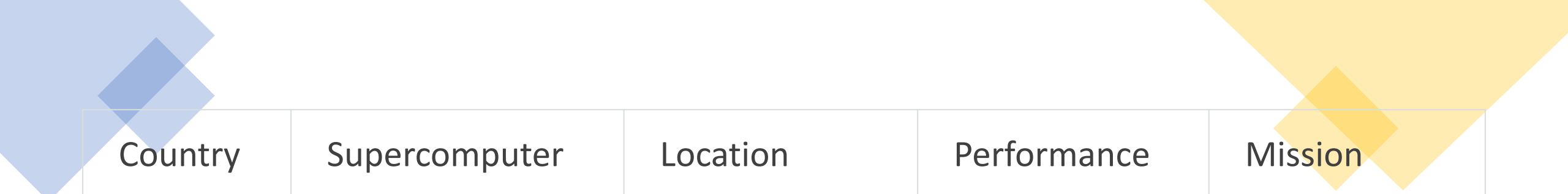
C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3


A glowing green padlock is positioned in the center of the image, appearing to be locked. The background is a dark, blue-toned circuit board with intricate patterns of lines and dots, suggesting a high-tech or digital environment. The text is overlaid on the circuit, centered horizontally and slightly above the padlock.


India has launched the Param Rudra
supercomputer at IIT-Patna.

Rank	Supercomputer Name	Country	Location / Institution	Peak Performance (Approx.)	Processor / Architecture	Key Purpose
1	Frontier	United States	Oak Ridge National Laboratory	~1.1 ExaFLOPS	AMD EPYC + GPUs	Climate, nuclear physics, AI
2	Aurora	United States	Argonne National Laboratory	~1.0 ExaFLOPS	Intel Xeon + GPUs	AI, materials science
3	Eagle	United States	Microsoft Azure	~561 PetaFLOPS	Cloud-based architecture	AI, cloud research
4	Fugaku	Japan	RIKEN Center	~442 PetaFLOPS	ARM-based A64FX	Disaster modelling, biology
5	LUMI	Finland (EU)	CSC Data Center	~380 PetaFLOPS	AMD EPYC + GPUs	Climate, AI
6	Leonardo	Italy (EU)	CINECA	~250 PetaFLOPS	Intel + NVIDIA	Industrial & scientific research
7	Summit	United States	Oak Ridge National Laboratory	~200 PetaFLOPS	IBM POWER9 + NVIDIA	AI, genomics
8	Sierra	United States	Lawrence Livermore Lab	~125 PetaFLOPS	IBM POWER9 + GPUs	Nuclear security
9	Sunway TaihuLight	China	National Supercomputing Center, Wuxi	~125 PetaFLOPS	Chinese SW26010	Weather, manufacturing
10	Perlmutter	United States	NERSC	~70 PetaFLOPS	AMD + NVIDIA	Energy research



Country	Supercomputer	Location	Performance	Mission
India	PARAM Siddhi-AI	C-DAC, Bengaluru	~5.3 PetaFLOPS	AI, Big Data
India	PARAM Pravega	IISc Bengaluru	~3.3 PetaFLOPS	Scientific simulations
India	PARAM Rudra	IIT-Patna	Multi- PetaFLOPS class	AI, HPC research
India	PARAM Ananta	IIT- Gandhinagar	PetaFLOPS- level	Climate, materials



- 
- **ExaFLOPS = 10^{18} calculations per second**
 - **Only the USA has crossed full ExaFLOPS computing so far**
 - **India is not yet in the global Top-10, but rapidly expanding under National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)**
 - **China's Sunway TaihuLight is notable for indigenous processors**
 - **Japan's Fugaku uses ARM architecture (non-x86)**

- India has launched the Param Rudra supercomputer at IIT-Patna.
भारत ने आईआईटी-पटना में परम रुद्र सुपरकंप्यूटर का शुभारंभ किया है।
 - This is the first supercomputing facility in Bihar.
यह बिहार का पहला सुपरकंप्यूटिंग केंद्र है।
-

Location & Institution | स्थान और संस्थान

- Installed at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Patna.
भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (आईआईटी), पटना में स्थापित।
 - IIT-Patna becomes the first institution in Bihar to host a national supercomputer.
आईआईटी-पटना बिहार का पहला संस्थान बना जहाँ राष्ट्रीय सुपरकंप्यूटर स्थापित हुआ।
-

Programme & Mission | कार्यक्रम और मिशन

- Launched under India's National Supercomputing Mission (NSM).
भारत के राष्ट्रीय सुपरकंप्यूटिंग मिशन (NSM) के तहत लॉन्च।
- NSM aims to strengthen indigenous high-performance computing capability.
NSM का उद्देश्य स्वदेशी उच्च-प्रदर्शन संगणन क्षमता को सुदृढ़ करना है।

Inauguration | उद्घाटन

- Formally inaugurated by Amitesh Kumar Sinha, Additional Secretary, MeitY.
MeitY के अपर सचिव अमितेश कुमार सिन्हा द्वारा औपचारिक उद्घाटन।
 - Highlights Centre's push for advanced research infrastructure in eastern India.
पूर्वी भारत में उन्नत शोध अवसंरचना को बढ़ावा देने का संकेत।
-

Scientific & Academic Significance | वैज्ञानिक एवं शैक्षणिक महत्व

- Enables advanced research in AI, data science, simulations, and engineering.
एआई, डेटा साइंस, सिमुलेशन और इंजीनियरिंग में उन्नत शोध संभव।
 - Supports complex computational work locally.
स्थानीय स्तर पर जटिल संगणन कार्य करने की क्षमता।
 - Reduces dependence on supercomputing facilities outside Bihar.
बिहार के बाहर स्थित सुपरकंप्यूटिंग सुविधाओं पर निर्भरता कम होगी।
-

Regional Development Dimension | क्षेत्रीय विकास पक्ष

- Major boost to science and technology ecosystem in eastern India.
पूर्वी भारत में विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र को बढ़ावा।
- Helps bridge regional imbalance in advanced research infrastructure.
उन्नत शोध अवसंरचना में क्षेत्रीय असंतुलन को कम करता है।

Historical Context | ऐतिहासिक परिप्रेक्ष्य

- India's PARAM supercomputer series was initiated by C-DAC in the 1990s.
भारत की PARAM सुपरकंप्यूटर श्रृंखला 1990 के दशक में C-DAC द्वारा शुरू की गई।
 - PARAM 8000 (1991) marked India's entry into indigenous supercomputing.
PARAM 8000 (1991) ने भारत को स्वदेशी सुपरकंप्यूटिंग में प्रवेश दिलाया।
 - PARAM Rudra continues the legacy of indigenisation.
परम रुद्र स्वदेशीकरण की उसी विरासत को आगे बढ़ाता है।
-

Political & Governance Aspect | राजनीतिक एवं प्रशासनिक पक्ष

- Part of India's digital sovereignty and Atmanirbhar Bharat goals.
भारत की डिजिटल संप्रभुता और आत्मनिर्भर भारत लक्ष्य का हिस्सा।
 - Strengthens Centre–State collaboration in R&D capacity building.
केंद्र-राज्य सहयोग के माध्यम से अनुसंधान क्षमता निर्माण।
-

Economic & Innovation Impact | आर्थिक एवं नवाचार प्रभाव

- Encourages innovation, startups, and industry–academia collaboration.
नवाचार, स्टार्ट-अप और उद्योग-शिक्षा सहयोग को प्रोत्साहन।
 - Supports high-skilled employment and knowledge economy in Bihar.
बिहार में उच्च-कौशल रोजगार और ज्ञान-आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था को समर्थन।
-

Q. With reference to the Param Rudra supercomputer, consider the following statements:

परम रुद्र सुपरकंप्यूटर के संदर्भ में निम्न कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:

1. It has been launched under the National Supercomputing Mission.

इसे राष्ट्रीय सुपरकंप्यूटिंग मिशन के तहत लॉन्च किया गया है।

2. IIT-Patna is the first institution in Bihar to host a supercomputer facility.

आईआईटी-पटना बिहार का पहला संस्थान है जहाँ सुपरकंप्यूटर सुविधा स्थापित हुई है।

3. The PARAM series of supercomputers was originally developed under the Digital India Mission.

PARAM सुपरकंप्यूटर श्रृंखला मूल रूप से डिजिटल इंडिया मिशन के तहत विकसित की गई थी।

Which of the statements given above are correct?

उपरोक्त में से कौन-से कथन सही हैं?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3



A fossil discovered in Gujarat may
redefine which species was the
world's largest snake.





Geological Period	Time Period (Million Years Ago)	Global Climate	Temperature Trend	Ice at Poles	Key Climate & Environmental Features
Paleocene	66 – 56 MYA	Warm	Rising	✗ None	Post-dinosaur extinction recovery; warm oceans; early mammals expanded
Eocene ★	56 – 34 MYA	Very hot (Greenhouse Earth)	Peak warmth	✗ None	Tropical forests worldwide; highest reptile sizes; minimal temperature gradient
Oligocene	34 – 23 MYA	Cooling	Sharp decline	☑ Antarctica	First major Antarctic ice sheets; decline of tropical forests
Miocene	23 – 5.3 MYA	Moderate to cooling	Gradual cooling	☑ Both poles	Expansion of grasslands; monsoon strengthening
Pliocene	5.3 – 2.6 MYA	Cooler than Miocene	Cooling	☑ Both poles	Climate similar to today but warmer; early human ancestors
Pleistocene	2.6 – 0.0117 MYA	Cold	Highly variable	☑ Extensive	Ice Age cycles; glaciers expanded & retreated
Holocene (Present)					

- A fossil discovered in Gujarat may redefine which species was the world's largest snake.
गुजरात में खोजा गया एक जीवाश्म दुनिया के सबसे बड़े साँप की परिभाषा बदल सकता है।
 - The fossil dates back to the early Eocene epoch, around 47 million years ago.
यह जीवाश्म प्रारंभिक इयोसीन काल (लगभग 47 मिलियन वर्ष पूर्व) का है।
-

Nature of Discovery | खोज की प्रकृति

- Fossil remains were found in sedimentary rock layers in western India (Gujarat).
पश्चिमी भारत (गुजरात) की अवसादी चट्टानों में जीवाश्म अवशेष मिले।
- The fossil primarily consists of well-preserved vertebrae.
मुख्य रूप से अच्छी तरह संरक्षित कशेरुकाएँ (vertebrae) प्राप्त हुई हैं।
- Vertebrae are key indicators for estimating snake body length and mass.
कशेरुकाएँ साँप की लंबाई और भार का अनुमान लगाने में अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण होती हैं।

Scientific Significance | वैज्ञानिक महत्व

- The size suggests the snake may rival or exceed previously known giant snakes.
आकार संकेत करता है कि यह पहले ज्ञात विशाल साँपों के बराबर या उनसे भी बड़ा हो सकता है।
 - The discovery challenges existing assumptions about the largest snake ever.
यह खोज अब तक के सबसे बड़े साँप संबंधी धारणाओं को चुनौती देती है।
-

Geological & Climatic Context | भूवैज्ञानिक एवं जलवायु संदर्भ

- The early Eocene was one of the hottest periods in Earth's recent geological history.
प्रारंभिक इयोसीन पृथ्वी के हालिया भूवैज्ञानिक इतिहास के सबसे गर्म कालों में से एक था।
 - Tropical climates were widespread, with minimal polar ice.
उष्णकटिबंधीय जलवायु व्यापक थी और ध्रुवीय बर्फ न्यूनतम थी।
 - Such conditions favoured larger body sizes in cold-blooded animals like reptiles.
ऐसी परिस्थितियाँ शीत-रक्त वाले जीवों (जैसे सरीसृप) को बड़े आकार में विकसित होने में सहायक थीं।
-

Geographical Importance | भौगोलिक महत्व

- The Gujarat region preserves important Eocene-era sedimentary deposits.
गुजरात क्षेत्र में इयोसीन काल के महत्वपूर्ण अवसादी निक्षेप सुरक्षित हैं।
- Western India was closer to the equator during the Eocene due to plate tectonics.
प्लेट विवर्तनिकी के कारण इयोसीन काल में पश्चिमी भारत भूमध्य रेखा के अधिक निकट था।

Evolutionary & Historical Context | विकासवादी एवं ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ

- Eocene epoch (56–34 million years ago) followed the Paleocene.
इयोसीन काल (56–34 मिलियन वर्ष पूर्व) पैलियोसीन के बाद आया।
 - Marked by rapid mammalian and reptilian evolution.
स्तनधारी और सरीसृपों के तीव्र विकास का काल।
 - Other giant snakes like *Titanoboa* are known from similar warm periods.
टाइटैनोबोआ जैसे विशाल साँप भी इसी प्रकार के गर्म काल से संबंधित हैं।
-

Climate–Biology Link | जलवायु–जीव विज्ञान संबंध

- Warmer global temperatures allow ectothermic animals to attain larger sizes.
उष्ण वैश्विक तापमान शीत-रक्त जीवों को बड़ा आकार प्राप्त करने में सक्षम बनाते हैं।
 - The Gujarat fossil fits well into this climate–size relationship.
गुजरात का यह जीवाश्म जलवायु–आकार संबंध से पूरी तरह मेल खाता है।
-

Q. With reference to the Gujarat fossil discovery, consider the following statements:

गुजरात में मिले जीवाश्म के संदर्भ में निम्न कथनों पर विचार करें:

1. The fossil belongs to the early Eocene epoch.

यह जीवाश्म प्रारंभिक इयोसीन काल से संबंधित है।

2. Warm global climates during the Eocene favoured large-sized reptiles.

इयोसीन काल की गर्म जलवायु ने बड़े आकार के सरीसृपों के विकास में सहायता की।

3. Vertebrae are unreliable indicators of snake body size.

कशेरुकाएँ साँप के शरीर के आकार का अविश्वसनीय संकेतक होती हैं।

Which of the statements given above are correct?

उपरोक्त में से कौन-से कथन सही हैं?

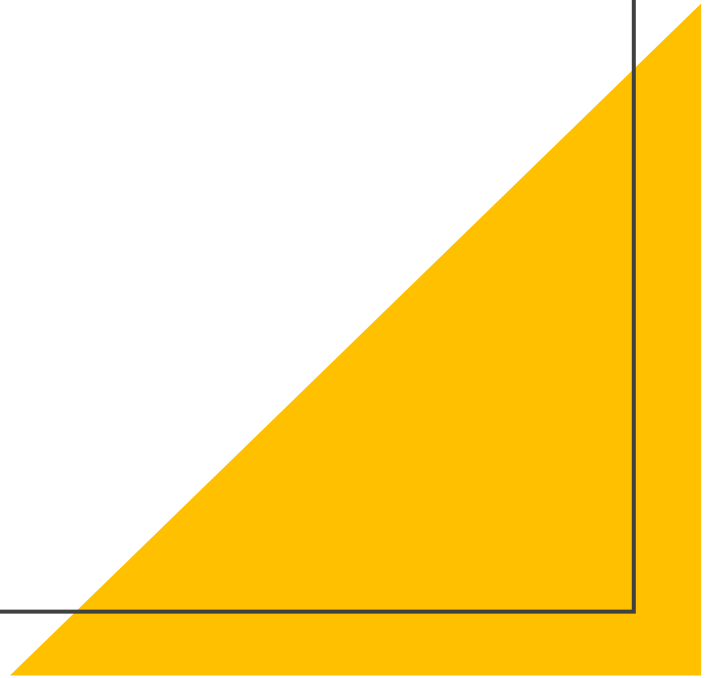
A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

India's first-ever
national standard for
agarbattis.



- Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has notified India's first-ever national standard for agarbattis.
भारतीय मानक ब्यूरो (BIS) ने अगरबत्ती के लिए भारत का पहला राष्ट्रीय मानक अधिसूचित किया है।
 - The standard is titled IS 19412:2025 and was announced on National Consumer Day 2025.
यह मानक IS 19412:2025 नाम से राष्ट्रीय उपभोक्ता दिवस 2025 पर घोषित किया गया।
-

About the Standard | मानक के बारे में

- IS 19412:2025 lays down uniform quality and safety norms for agarbattis.
IS 19412:2025 अगरबत्तियों के लिए एकरूप गुणवत्ता और सुरक्षा मानदंड निर्धारित करता है।
 - It is India's first comprehensive national framework for incense sticks.
यह अगरबत्तियों के लिए भारत का पहला व्यापक राष्ट्रीय ढाँचा है।
-

Scope & Key Provisions | दायरा और प्रमुख प्रावधान

- Specifies standards for raw materials used in manufacturing.
निर्माण में प्रयुक्त कच्चे माल के लिए मानक तय करता है।
- Defines norms for uniform burning performance and ash formation.
समान जलने की क्षमता और राख निर्माण के मानदंड निर्धारित करता है।
- Covers fragrance quality and dispersion.
सुगंध की गुणवत्ता और उसके प्रसार को शामिल करता है।
- Introduces chemical safety and labelling requirements.
रासायनिक सुरक्षा और लेबलिंग संबंधी आवश्यकताएँ निर्धारित करता है।

Consumer Safety Dimension | उपभोक्ता सुरक्षा पक्ष

- Aims to enhance consumer confidence in agarbatti products.
उपभोक्ताओं का अगरबत्ती उत्पादों पर विश्वास बढ़ाने का उद्देश्य।
 - Reduces health risks from poor-quality or chemically unsafe incense.
घटिया या रासायनिक रूप से असुरक्षित अगरबत्तियों से होने वाले स्वास्थ्य जोखिम कम होंगे।
-

Economic & Industrial Significance | आर्थिक एवं औद्योगिक महत्व

- India is the world's largest producer and exporter of agarbattis.
भारत दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा अगरबत्ती उत्पादक और निर्यातक है।
 - The standard supports export competitiveness by aligning with global norms.
वैश्विक मानकों से सामंजस्य स्थापित कर निर्यात प्रतिस्पर्धा को बढ़ावा।
 - Ensures consistency and quality in the domestic market.
घरेलू बाजार में गुणवत्ता और एकरूपता सुनिश्चित करता है।
-

MSME & Employment Angle | एमएसएमई और रोजगार पक्ष

- Agarbatti manufacturing is a major MSME-driven and labour-intensive sector.
अगरबत्ती उद्योग एक प्रमुख एमएसएमई और श्रम-प्रधान क्षेत्र है।
- The standard will help small manufacturers upgrade processes and quality.
यह मानक छोटे निर्माताओं को प्रक्रियाएँ और गुणवत्ता सुधारने में मदद करेगा।
- Supports livelihood of women and home-based workers.
महिलाओं और घरेलू श्रमिकों की आजीविका को समर्थन।

Cultural & Social Context | सांस्कृतिक एवं सामाजिक संदर्भ

- Agarbattis are integral to religious rituals and daily worship in India.
अगरबत्ती भारत में धार्मिक अनुष्ठानों और दैनिक पूजा का अभिन्न हिस्सा है।
 - Standardisation balances tradition with modern safety and quality norms.
मानकीकरण परंपरा और आधुनिक सुरक्षा मानकों के बीच संतुलन बनाता है।
-

Institutional Background | संस्थागत पृष्ठभूमि

- BIS is the national standards body under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.
BIS उपभोक्ता कार्य मंत्रालय के अधीन राष्ट्रीय मानक निकाय है।
 - BIS Act, 2016 empowers it to formulate and notify standards.
BIS अधिनियम, 2016 इसे मानक बनाने और अधिसूचित करने का अधिकार देता है।
-

Q. With reference to IS 19412:2025, consider the following statements:

IS 19412:2025 के संदर्भ में निम्न कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:

1. It is India's first national standard specifically for agarbattis.

यह विशेष रूप से अगरबत्तियों के लिए भारत का पहला राष्ट्रीय मानक है।

2. It covers raw materials, burning performance, fragrance quality and labelling norms.

यह कच्चे माल, जलने की क्षमता, सुगंध गुणवत्ता और लेबलिंग मानदंडों को शामिल करता है।

3. It was notified by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

इसे खाद्य सुरक्षा एवं मानक प्राधिकरण (FSSAI) ने अधिसूचित किया है।

Which of the statements given above are correct?

उपरोक्त में से कौन-से कथन सही हैं?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

An aerial photograph of a city skyline at sunset. The sky is a warm, hazy orange, and the city below is densely packed with buildings. Several prominent skyscrapers stand out against the horizon. The text "Israel has formally recognised Somaliland as an independent state." is overlaid in white, centered in the upper half of the image.

Israel has formally recognised
Somaliland as an independent state.





DJIBOUTI

SOMALILAND

PUNTLAND

ETHIOPIA

Indian Ocean

Disputed area

SOMALIA

Mogadishu

KENYA

BBC NEWS

- Israel has formally recognised Somaliland as an independent state.
इज़राइल ने औपचारिक रूप से सोमालीलैंड को एक स्वतंत्र राष्ट्र के रूप में मान्यता दी है।
 - Israel becomes the first country to recognise Somaliland more than 30 years after its declaration of independence.
सोमालीलैंड की स्वतंत्रता घोषणा के 30 वर्ष से अधिक समय बाद इज़राइल ऐसा करने वाला पहला देश बना है।
-



Formal Recognition Agreement | औपचारिक मान्यता समझौता

- The recognition declaration was signed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar.
मान्यता घोषणा पर इज़राइल के प्रधानमंत्री बेंजामिन नेतन्याहू और विदेश मंत्री गिडियन सार ने हस्ताक्षर किए।
 - Somaliland President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi signed on behalf of Somaliland.
सोमालीलैंड की ओर से राष्ट्रपति अब्दिरहमान मोहम्मद अब्दुल्लाही ने हस्ताक्षर किए।
 - Israel described the move as "seminal and historic".
इज़राइल ने इस कदम को "निर्णायक और ऐतिहासिक" बताया।
-

About Somaliland | सोमालीलैंड के बारे में

- Somaliland is located in the Horn of Africa and declared independence from Somalia in 1991.
सोमालीलैंड अफ्रीका के हॉर्न क्षेत्र में स्थित है और 1991 में सोमालिया से अलग होने की घोषणा की थी।
 - It has its own government, currency, military, and elections but lacked international recognition.
इसकी अपनी सरकार, मुद्रा, सेना और चुनाव हैं, लेकिन अंतरराष्ट्रीय मान्यता नहीं थी।
-

Historical Background | ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि

- Somaliland briefly gained independence in 1960 before merging with Italian Somalia.
सोमालीलैंड ने 1960 में थोड़े समय के लिए स्वतंत्रता प्राप्त की थी, फिर इटैलियन सोमालिया में विलय हो गया।
 - Following Somalia's civil war collapse in 1991, Somaliland reasserted independence.
1991 में सोमालिया के गृहयुद्ध के बाद सोमालीलैंड ने पुनः स्वतंत्रता की घोषणा की।
-

Geopolitical Significance | भू-राजनीतिक महत्व

- The move marks a major geopolitical shift in the Horn of Africa.
यह कदम हॉर्न ऑफ अफ्रीका में एक बड़ा भू-राजनीतिक परिवर्तन दर्शाता है।
- Israel expands diplomatic engagement with unrecognised or partially recognised entities.
इज़राइल गैर-मान्यता प्राप्त या आंशिक रूप से मान्यता प्राप्त क्षेत्रों से कूटनीतिक संबंध बढ़ा रहा है।
- May influence other countries' stance on Somaliland's recognition.
यह अन्य देशों के रुख को भी प्रभावित कर सकता है।

Strategic & Security Angle | रणनीतिक एवं सुरक्षा पक्ष

- Somaliland is strategically located near the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea trade routes.
सोमालीलैंड अदन की खाड़ी और लाल सागर के व्यापार मार्गों के निकट रणनीतिक स्थिति में है।
 - Region is crucial for global maritime trade and energy routes.
यह क्षेत्र वैश्विक समुद्री व्यापार और ऊर्जा मार्गों के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है।
 - Israel's recognition may have security and maritime implications.
इज़राइल की मान्यता के सुरक्षा और समुद्री रणनीतिक निहितार्थ हो सकते हैं।
-

Political & Diplomatic Implications | राजनीतिक एवं कूटनीतिक प्रभाव

- Challenges Somalia's claim over its territorial integrity.
यह सोमालिया की क्षेत्रीय अखंडता के दावे को चुनौती देता है।
- Could complicate African Union and UN positions on sovereignty.
अफ्रीकी संघ और संयुक्त राष्ट्र की संप्रभुता संबंधी स्थिति को जटिल बना सकता है।
- Signals Israel's evolving Africa policy.
अफ्रीका के प्रति इज़राइल की बदलती नीति को दर्शाता है।

Q. With reference to Israel's recognition of Somaliland, consider the following statements:

इज़राइल द्वारा सोमालीलैंड को मान्यता देने के संदर्भ में निम्न कथनों पर विचार करें:

- 1. Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991.**
सोमालीलैंड ने 1991 में सोमालिया से स्वतंत्रता की घोषणा की।
- 2. Israel is the first country to formally recognise Somaliland.**
इज़राइल सोमालीलैंड को औपचारिक मान्यता देने वाला पहला देश है।
- 3. Somaliland is located on the Mediterranean coast of Africa.**
सोमालीलैंड अफ्रीका के भूमध्यसागरीय तट पर स्थित है।

Which of the statements given above are correct?

उपरोक्त में से कौन-से कथन सही हैं?

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

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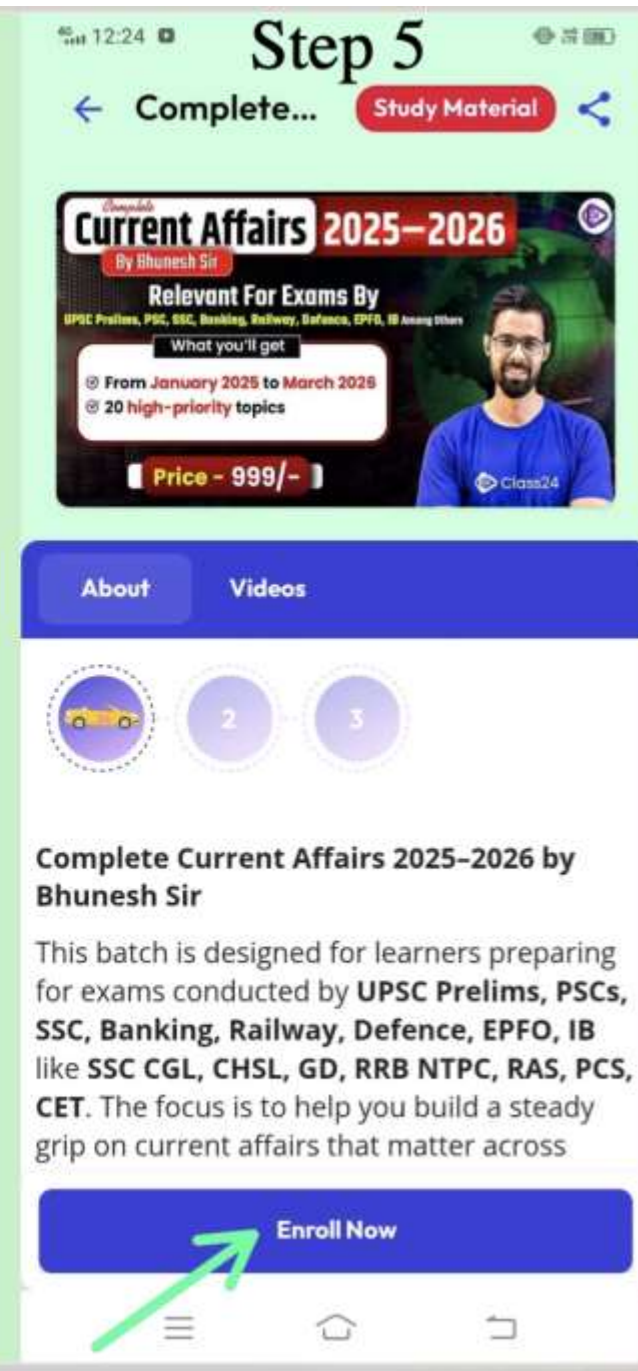
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Word of the day

Lugubrious:

excessively mournful

Synonyms: gloomy, unhappy, miserable

Usage: *His face looked lugubrious after hearing the sad news.*

Pronunciation:

newsth.live/lugubriouspro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /lugubriəs/





Thank you 😊

