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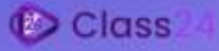
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“The Seven Social Sins are:

Wealth without work.

Pleasure without conscience.

Knowledge without character.

Commerce without morality.

Science without humanity.

Worship without sacrifice.

Politics without principle.

India and France finalise agreement for 26 Rafale-Ms

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

India and France on Monday formally concluded an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA), valued at nearly 264,000 crore, to procure 26 Rafale-M fighter jets for the Indian Navy. Deliveries are set to begin from mid-2028 and likely to be completed by 2030.

The IGA was signed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Minister of Armed Forces of France Sebastien Lecornu remotely.

"The deal includes training, simulator, associated equipment, weapons, and performance-based logistics. It also includes additional equipment for the existing Rafale fleet of the Indian Air Force," a Defence Ministry statement said, adding that the crew will undergo training in France and India. The IGA also includes transfer of technology for the integration of indigenous weapons, such as the Astra Beyond Visual Range air-to-air missile, on the Rafales. "The delivery of these aircraft would be completed by 2030, with the crew undergoing training in France and India," the Defence Ministry statement said.

Likely to generate jobs

"It also includes the setting up of production facility for Rafale Fuselage as well as Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facilities for aircraft engine, sensors and weapons in India," the statement said, adding that the deal is expected to generate thousands of jobs and revenue for a large number of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

The French Defence Minister was scheduled to vi-



Deliveries are set to begin from mid-2028 and likely to be completed by 2030. DINAKAR PERI

sit India to sign the deal, but the visit was deferred due to personal reasons. Hence, the signing of the IGA was done by the two Ministers remotely.

The signed copies of the agreement, aircraft package supply protocol, and weapons package supply protocol were exchanged by Indian and French officials in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh at Nausena Bhawan, the Defence Ministry said in a statement. Navy Vice-Chief Vice-Admiral Krishna Swaminathan and French Ambassador in India Thoerry Mathou were also present at the event. In addition to the IGA, several associated Government-to-Business agreements were concluded.

The Indian Navy currently operates two aircraft carriers - the *INS Vikramaditya* procured from Russia and the indigenously built *INS Vikrant* commissioned in September 2022.

As per contractual terms, deliveries will begin 37 months from the date of contract and will be completed in 66 months. The deal includes 22 single-seater jets that can operate off aircraft carriers and four twin-seater trainer jets that are not carrier-compatible.

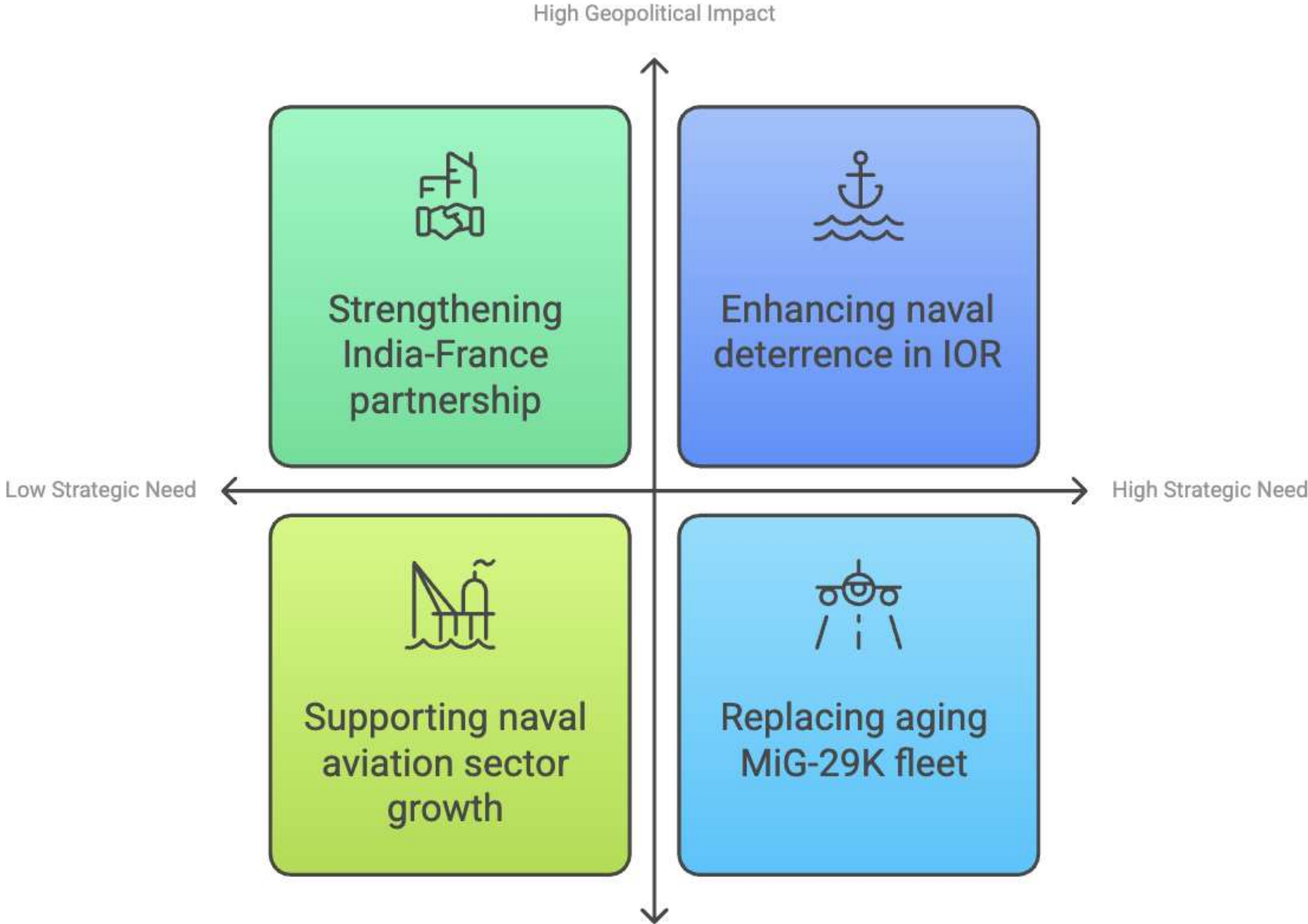
India-France Rafale-M Deal Timeline



2. Key Features of the Deal:

- **Package Includes:**
 - Training for Indian Navy pilots (initially in France).
 - Weapons systems (like Meteor missiles, air-to-surface and anti-ship missiles).
 - Spare parts and logistics support.
 - Performance-based logistics (PBL) and upgrade kits.
 - Integration support with Indian aircraft carriers.
- **Offset Clause:**
 - Major share of manufacturing, servicing to happen in India.
 - **Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)** participation encouraged.

Strategic Importance of Rafale-M Jets for Indian Defense



India–France Military Deals & Collaborations

Year	Deal / Agreement	Description	Significance
2016	Rafale Jet Deal	India signed a €7.87 billion deal to purchase 36 Rafale fighter jets from Dassault Aviation.	First major fighter jet impc air superiority.
2005–2024	Scorpène Submarines (Project 75)	Agreement with French DCNS (now Naval Group) to build 6 submarines in India via Mazagon Dock.	Promotes Make in India; ei capability.
2023	Rafale-M Naval Variant Proposal	France proposed Rafale-M (Marine) for Indian Navy's aircraft carriers.	Competing with US F/A-18
2023	Safran Jet Engine JV Proposal	India and France in talks for joint development of fighter jet engines (Safran + HAL).	Key step in self-reliance; s fighter program.

2023	Three Additional Scorpène Submarines	Proposal cleared under Project 75I to add 3 more submarines.	Enhances Indo-Pacific pre capability.
2019	Inter-Governmental Logistics Agreement	Signed for mutual access to military bases (India & France).	India can access French b Réunion (Indian Ocean); in
2023	Space & AI in Defence MoU	Agreement to jointly explore space-based surveillance, AI, cyber-security.	Deepens tech partnership
2020–2024	Joint Naval Exercises (Varuna)	Annual India–France Varuna naval exercise continues regularly.	Enhances maritime interop Region (IOR).
Ongoing	French Support for AMCA Project	Technical discussions on collaboration in India’s 5th-gen fighter project (AMCA).	Strategic tech transfer for development.

In 2024, India's military expenditure was nine times that of Pak.: SIPRI

The country's military expenditure, the fifth largest globally, grew by 16% to \$86.1 billion, while Pakistan spent \$10.2 billion, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India's military spending in 2024 was nearly nine times that of Pakistan's expenditure, according to a study released on Monday by a leading Swedish think tank that comes amid growing tensions between the two countries over the Pahal-gam terror attack.

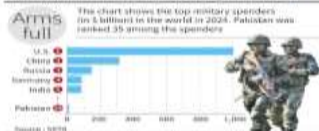
The country's military expenditure, the fifth largest globally, grew by 16% to \$86.1 billion while Pakistan spent \$10.2 billion, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The top five military spenders — the United States, China, Russia, Germany and India — accounted for 80% of the global total, with combined spending of \$1,635 billion, it said.

India's military expenditure increased by 7% to an estimated \$314 billion, marking three decades of consecutive growth, the study noted. "China's military spending of \$1,635 billion, it said.



Troops stand guard at a market area in Srinagar on Monday. AFP



The chart shows the top military spenders in 2024. Pakistan was ranked 35 among the spenders

India's military expenditure increased by 7% to an estimated \$314 billion, marking three decades of consecutive growth, the study noted. "China's military spending of \$1,635 billion, it said.

Delhi HC sends 3 CBI officials to agency custody in graft case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has remanded three CBI officials to the custody of the agency in a corruption case, observing that the situation "shakes the edifice of the machinery" whose primary duty is to bring wrongdoers to justice.

Justice Ramesh Ransil Krishna, in an April 25 order, said, "It is one of the unique cases of rampant corruption in CBI, IED and such other departments which shakes the entire edifice of our executive and the investigating machinery which have the primary duty of investigating in crime and bring the culprits to face the penalty consequent."

The court noted that the court is not an isolated incident of corruption by a government official.

With the war in Ukraine in its third year, military expenditure kept rising across the continent, pushing European military spending beyond the level recorded at the end of the Cold War, it noted.

SIPRI said Russia's military expenditure reached an estimated \$44.9 billion in 2024, a 38% increase from 2023 and double the level in 2020. This represented 7.1% of Russia's GDP and 19% of all Russian government spending.

Ukraine's total military expenditure grew by 2.9% to reach \$64.7 billion — equivalent to 43% of Russia's spending. At 34% of GDP, Ukraine had the largest military burden of any country in 2024, the report added.

"Russia once again significantly increased its military spending, which the spending gap with Ukraine," said Fern Lopez de Letona, senior researcher with the SIPRI Military Expenditure and Production Programme.

Long-term and diplomatic visas of Pakistani nationals will remain valid: officials

Kadlol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Long-term visas (LTVs) and official or diplomatic visas will remain valid even after the April 29 deadline when Indian visas issued to Pakistani citizens will be reviewed.

Officials have clarified that of the 10 categories of visas issued by India to Pakistani nationals, two would remain valid after Tuesday and the validity of the LTVs would not be affected by the religious identity of the visa holders.

On April 23, Foreign Secretary Vikramjit Singh announced that all visas in effect in Pakistan nationals under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (OVISA) would be reviewed on April 26. Briefing presspersons on April 23, Mr. Singh urged all Pakistani nationals with "valid endorsements" to visit India through the Integrated Check Post at AARPI by May 1.

The rest of the visas such as "visa on arrival" those issued to business persons, visitors, film industry workers, and journalists and visas issued by the SIPRI Military Expenditure and Production Programme.



The personnel check movements of Pakistan nationals leaving India through the Aarpi Check Post near Aarpi, on Monday. PTI

April 27. Apart from these, pilgrim visas and group pilgrim visas to religious pilgrims of Pakistan were revoked.

The official notification said the deadline for visa for officials and diplomats from Pakistan would be determined by the External Affairs Ministry. An official note circulated by the Ministry on April 24 said the LTVs would remain valid after April 29

RSS offshoot slams Tikait's Indus Waters Treaty remark

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), an offshoot of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), on Monday demanded action against Bharatiya Janata Union (BJU) leader Parvath Thot for his statement on the Union government's decision to place the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance.

In a video clip being shared on social media, Mr. Thot said he is not condemning the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, and calling for the strictest action against the perpetrators.

He is also heard saying the Narendra Modi government should not have suspended the treaty with Pakistan as it would affect the common people, especially farmers, in the neighbouring country.

Turning Mr. Thot's statement "Support for any nationalistic move," the BJP called for a probe to find out at whom he had "Pakistan-supporting statements" were being made. BJP general secretary Manoj Mohan Mishra called for "identifying the names of the agitators, who run a false political movement in the name of farmers".

JNUSU results: Left wins 3 posts, ABVP makes a mark

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Left Unity panel on Monday won three seats in the Jayashankar Nehru University Students' Union, while the Aardhi Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad won one seat, after a gap of 10 years.

Through the night, the JNU witnessed a roller coaster from both sides. The post of president was won by the Left Unity's Nitish Kumar, while Manoj Kumar won the post of vice president and Manisha the post of general secretary.

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SC notice to govt. on plea to regulate sexually explicit content on OTT platforms

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said a petition to check obscene, indecent and objectionable content on OTT platforms was an important and serious issue as mobile phones have reached the hands of even children below the age of 10.

Undoubtedly, parents give phones to even small children to keep them occupied, Justice B.R. Gavai remarked. Justice General Tandon said children had become adept at technology, provided they reach the "correct sites" which helped them academically or provide clean fun.

The court said the government should take appropriate steps, including the constitution of a National Content Control Authority, to prohibit such explicit content from being shown on OTT platforms.

Delhi court extends Tahawwur Rana's NIA custody by 12 days

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday extended by 12 days the National Investigation Agency (NIA) custody of 26/11 Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Hussain Rana.

Special Judge Chandanjit Singh of the Patiala District Court allowed the plea for custody extension filed by the central agency, which produced Rana in court after his 10-day initial custody expired on Monday.

While ordering the NIA custody of the accused, the court directed the agency to conduct his medical examination every 24 hours, and regulate his diet by a lawyer every alternate day, in the presence of NIA officials, who would be out of

SC asks Centre if it was working for the welfare of road accident victims

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked whether the Union government was really working for the welfare of the common man by constructing huge highways without providing any facilities for emergency medical care for road accident victims.

"Can you not assess about this provision? People are dying in road accidents. You are constructing huge highways but people are dying there because there is no facility. There is no scheme for golden hour treatment," Justice A.K. Shah told the Centre. The court postponed the case while hearing a case over the delay in the implementation of the golden hour when there is no person to help them with money to pay for critical care.



The Supreme Court says there is no scheme for golden hour treatment of victims of road accidents. IPS, TOI/NEWS

In a judgment in January, the Supreme Court had directed the Centre to immediately frame a scheme for the immediate medical treatment of road accident victims during golden hour when there is no person to help them with money to pay for critical care.

preventing death by providing prompt medical care. The court had noted that Section 162 of the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act had come into force on April 1, 2022. Yet, the government had not framed a scheme for its seamless implementation on the ground. Section 162 provides that the insurance companies must provide for treatment of road accident victims, including clearing golden hour, in accordance with a scheme which has to be made under the MV Act.

"Section 162 is crucial in the present scenario where motor accident cases are ever increasing," Justice Shah had said. The Bench asked for the notified scheme to be placed on record by May 9. It posted the case on May 11.

Multi-layer frisking police escort for question papers among NEET plan

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Education Ministry is holding a series of meetings with District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police from all States and Union Territories to ensure there are no lapses in the National Eligibility Test (NEET) exam.

The Ministry has been working on a "fool proof" plan after last year's exam was marred by irregularities, including paper leaks and security concerns. "To ensure smooth conduct and secure conduct of NEET-UG, a series of meetings have been held with DMs and SAs of all States and UTs. The district level coordination committees are being fully activated to ensure the security of question papers and strict response," a source said.

"There will be multi-layered frisking by district police in addition to National Testing Agency-deployed security at the centres. The transport of confidential materials to the centres will be under full police escort. Coaching centres and digital platforms will be monitored to

Delhi court extends Rana's medical examination every 24 hours

The Hindu Bureau
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While ordering the NIA custody of the accused, the court directed the agency to conduct his medical examination every 24 hours, and regulate his diet by a lawyer every alternate day, in the presence of NIA officials, who would be out of

Prevent organised cheating networks: the source added.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Ministry has been deployed for mandatory inspection of all examination centres, while there will be visits by DMs and SAs to exam centres to assess preparedness.

The NTA on Saturday opened a platform to report suspicious claims regarding NEET-UG. "Candidates can report any suspicious activities falling under the purview of the NTA on its official website or social media accounts claiming access to question papers, individuals claiming access to exam content and impersonation of NTA or government officials," NTA Director-General Pradeep Singh Khattar said.

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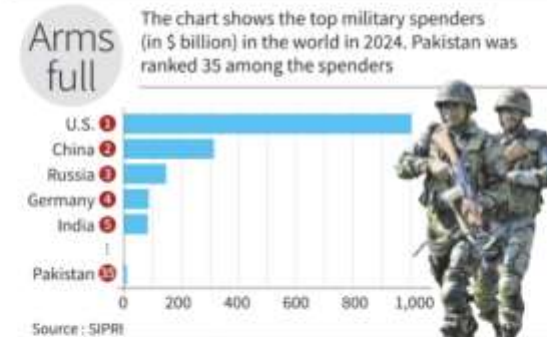
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China's military expenditure increased by 7% to an estimated \$314 billion, marking three decades of consecutive growth, the study noted. China accounted for 50% of all mil-



Troops stand guard at a market area in Srinagar on Monday. AFP



itary spending in Asia and Oceania, investing in the continued modernisation of its military and expansion of its cyberwarfare capabilities and nuclear arsenal, it said in the report

titled "Trends in World Military Expenditure 2024".

SIPRI said military spending in Europe (including Russia) rose by 17% to \$693 billion and was the main contributor to the

global increase in 2024.

With the war in Ukraine in its third year, military expenditure kept rising across the continent, pushing European military spending beyond the level recorded at the end of the Cold War, it noted.

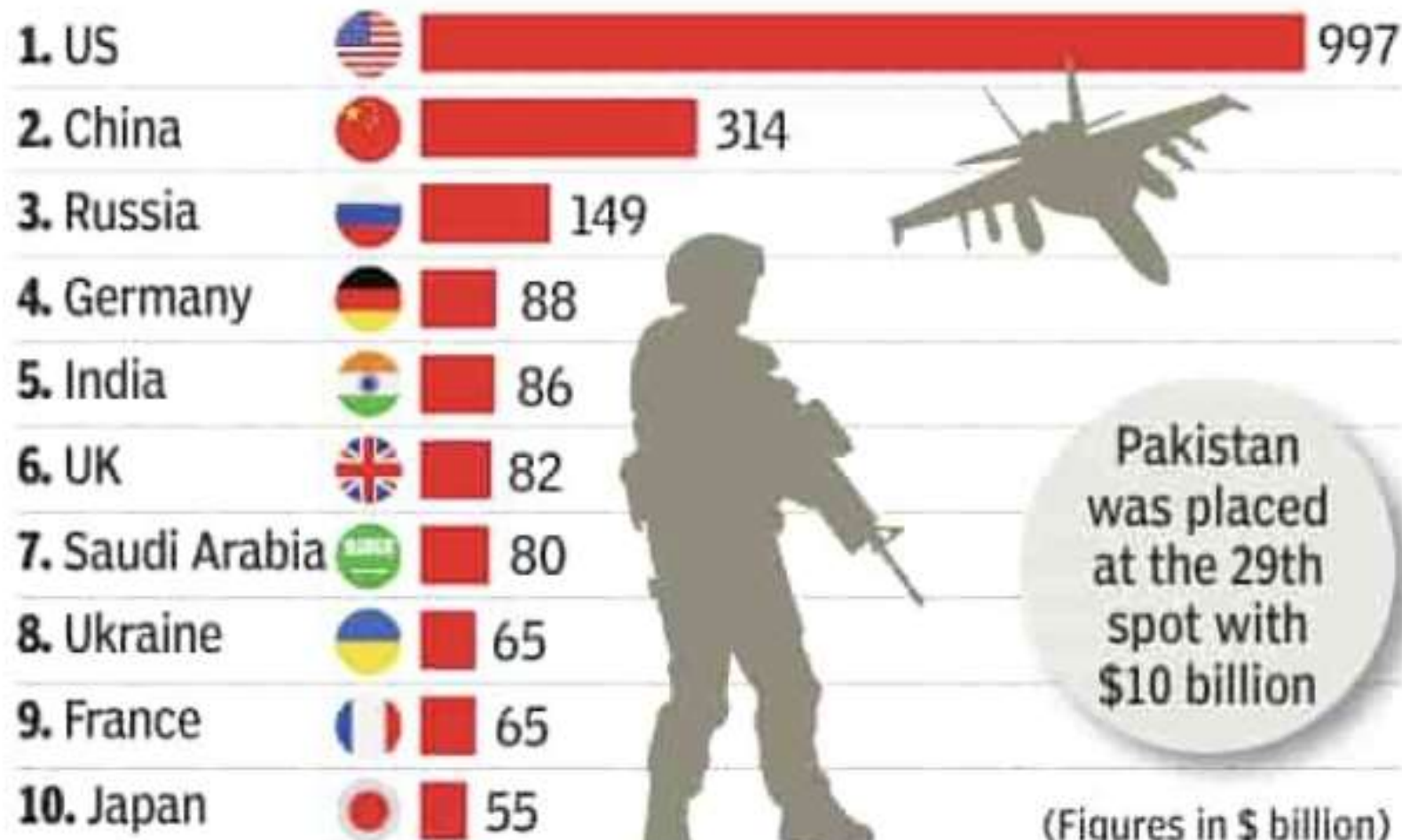
SIPRI said Russia's military expenditure reached an estimated \$149 billion in 2024, a 38% increase from 2023 and double the level in 2015. This represented 7.1% of Russia's GDP and 19% of all Russian government spending.

Ukraine's total military expenditure grew by 2.9% to reach \$64.7 billion – equivalent to 43% of Russia's spending. At 34% of GDP, Ukraine had the largest military burden of any country in 2024, the report added.

"Russia once again significantly increased its military spending, widening the spending gap with Ukraine," said Diego Lopes da Silva, Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Military Expenditure and Arms Production Programme.

US SPENDS 11X MORE THAN INDIA

Top 10 military spenders



3. Regional Trends and Insights:

- **China:**
 - Military spending increased **by 7%** in 2024.
 - Dominates **50%** of all military spending in **Asia and Oceania**.
- **Russia:**
 - Spending surged **38%** to ~\$149 billion.
 - Largest increase since Cold War era.
- **Europe:**
 - Military expenditure rose **17%** to ~\$693 billion (including Russia).
- **Ukraine:**
 - Military expenditure grew **by 2.9%** to ~\$64.7 billion.
 - Ukraine's defense spending is **34% of its GDP** — highest share globally.

4. Special Focus – India's Military Position:

- **Growth:**
 - 1.6% increase compared to 2023.
- **Reasons for Higher Spending:**
 - Border tensions with China and Pakistan.
 - Focus on modernization: Rafale jets, Tejas, S-400, submarines, INS Vikrant, drones.
 - Strategic autonomy (reducing defense import dependency).
- **Security Focus Areas:**
 - Cybersecurity, nuclear modernization, maritime security.

India's urban future is at a crossroads

As summer intensifies, Indian cities are struggling with water shortages and rising electricity demand and temperatures. Reports from Bengaluru and Hyderabad show a spike in water tanker bookings while power cuts loom due to increased air-conditioner usage. These annual struggles raise a pressing question — our cities, where more than 30% of Indians live, prepared for climate extremes and rapid development? Urbanisation, while bringing about growth and opportunities, also opens the way for increased pollution, congestion, and environmental degradation, which often hit the underprivileged the hardest. Sustainable Futures Collective, in their report, 'In India Ready for a Warming World?' (2020), find that there is much more to be done regarding long-term planning for climate change in cities. Concerns about how our cities are handling the urban heat island effect have also been raised often in Parliament. Such stark ground realities challenge our cities face in pursuing sustainable Development Goal-11 (SDG-11) to create inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities by 2030.

Do indices capture reality? While global SDG-11 indicators exist, India lacks city-level tools for effective tracking. NFPA's Urban Index ranks 100 Indian cities on 77 indicators, but its SDG-11 component is limited to four indicators: air quality, roads, PM2.5 housing, and living treatment. The Ease of Living Index covers 11 cities but lacks a comprehensive SDG-11 component.

International indices such as Mercer's and the Economist's livability indices, though useful, do not capture the unique Indian ground realities. The absence of a localised index in India hampers policymakers from identifying genuine ante.



Aksh Kumar
 Professor, School of Environment, University of Hyderabad



Pavan Kumar
 Assistant Professor, School of Environment, University of Hyderabad

sustainable, and inclusive cities, creating a policy-research gap. To bridge this gap and supplement the indices used by NFPA along with a more comprehensive set of indices, our research team created a localised index — one for each urban city — ranked 10 major cities (Hyderabad, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Mumbai, Pune, Kolkata, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, and Surat) based on performance across select indicators for each index. Five indicators were used for safety, 19 for resilience, 10 for livability and sustainability indices. The parameters used for defining the indicators were borrowed from the United Nations' definitions of the same in the urban context. Data was sourced from a wide range of datasets such as Census 2011, Road Transport Yearbook, Indian Forest Survey, National Crime Research Bureau, Fire & Labour Force Survey, National Family Health Survey 5, Reserve Bank of India, India Meteorological Department's Climatological Tables and the Ministry of Urban and Housing's Smart City Index 2021. We employed a novel method known as the Smart City Index Weighting technique (developed from Multi-Criteria Analysis) making it possible to generate weights for the indices as per their relative importance in the approach to weighting.

The results provide key insights into SDG-11 implementation across cities. Among the 10 major cities analysed, Ahmedabad ranked first in sustainability, while Jaipur ranked the lowest. Bengaluru appeared to be the safest city, whereas Kolkata ranked lowest in safety. Surat led in sustainability, while Kolkata lagged behind in terms of climate resilience. Chennai ranked first, while Jaipur was the least resilient. A comparison with NFPA's SDG-11 rankings showed that cities ranked as more sustainable and resilient based poorly in our indices.

Variations in the inclusivity index reflect disparities in social

and economic participation, suggesting the need for equitable access to opportunities in urban planning and budgeting. The index of inclusivity. Differences in safety rankings suggest that while some cities benefit from rigorous law enforcement, others require better urban planning and urban safety strategies. Our findings on environmental planning, waste management, and pollution control, stressing the need for comprehensive sustainability policies. Disparities in resilience highlight gaps in disaster preparedness and recovery. Notably, the Annual Survey of Indian City Systems (ASICS) by Jaanagraha reported that only 11 cities have adopted sustainability plans, while 17 had 'city resilience strategies'. This indicates significant gaps in the groundwork needed for SDG-11 to make substantial progress in India.

The road ahead India's urban future is at a crossroads. Cities must establish better urban planning and development. SDG-11 of the urban local bodies (ULBs) level. While some States and Urban Territories have advanced smart-city-level monitoring, Bengaluru, urban local bodies across India are still struggling to implement and control centres. In the absence of a localised index, cities must be leveraged to collect real-time data and enhance urban planning and development processes. Additionally, as almost a third of urban residents are in slums, addressing their needs is critical. India still relies on Census 2011 data, leading to severe underestimation of urban poverty. A periodic Urban Poverty Quality of Life Survey at the city level is necessary to bridge this gap.

Each city's unique challenges, requiring localised governance, better planning, and city-specific strategies. Addressing these challenges through data-backed, city-specific policies is crucial for a more equitable urban future.

There is little reason for the NDA to worry

The political repercussions of the Waaf (Amendment) Act may be limited

STATE OF PLAY

Narayan Kumar
 Editor

The Waaf (Amendment) Act, 2022, has ignited controversy among Muslim leaders. It has triggered resignations from some Jammu Dal (United) leaders, causing unrest within the ranks of the party's alliance and the Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) in Bihar and at the Centre. West Bengal set to go to polls later this year, this unrest raises questions about the electoral implications for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

While there is a sizeable number of Muslim voters in Bihar, who hold the key for electoral success in many assembly constituencies, it is clear that the Waaf Act could adversely affect the electoral prospects of the NDA in Bihar. The BJP-led alliance has never been able to secure the Centre of Muslim voters.

According to the 2011 Census, Muslims make up around 16% of Bihar's population. In developed states like Uttar Pradesh, Muslims account for over 28% of the electorate, with around 20 states having 20-25% Muslim voters. In some constituencies such as Aurangabad and Buxardhwan, Muslim voters account for 70% of the electorate. Overall, Muslims significantly influence 40-70% of Bihar's 243 Assembly seats. A unified Muslim vote could well come in these areas.

However, historically, the BJP-led alliance has failed to gain substantial support among the community. The only exception was in the 2008 elections when the BJP allied with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Congress. De-

the BJP was divided, with 22% backing the party and 22% supporting the Congress, which did not ally with the RJD during that election.

During the 2018 Assembly elections, the Mahagathabandhan comprising the RJD, the JDU, and Congress received support from 69% of Muslims, while the NDA received support from only 6% of Muslims. The split between the RJD and the JDU in 2018, and the alliance between the JDU and the RJD, may have led to the JDU's gain credibility among Muslim voters.

In 2020, the RJD (led by the NDA) remained internal, with only 1% of Muslims supporting it. The RJD-led Mahagathabandhan received 76% of the Muslim vote, a significant increase compared to 2018. This clearly suggests that the NDA comprising the JDU and the RJD as the main partners has never been the beneficiary of the Muslim vote. Even if Muslims are unhappy or angry with the passage of the Waaf (Amendment) Act, it may not adversely affect the political prospects of the NDA in Bihar.

While the Waaf (Amendment) Act has undoubtedly sparked discontent among Muslims in Bihar and across India, the political repercussions in Bihar may be limited. Voting data shows that the JDU-RJD alliance has never been a primary choice for Muslim voters, except during the brief 2018 alliance between the RJD and Congress. Thus, while the controversy may deepen characterisation, it is unlikely to significantly shift electoral dynamics in Bihar.

During the JDU Assembly election, the NDA, which included Narayan Kumar's JDU, did not receive any votes in support from Muslims (27%). In contrast, support for

the BJP was divided, with 22% backing the party and 22% supporting the Congress, which did not ally with the RJD during that election.

During the 2018 Assembly elections, the Mahagathabandhan comprising the RJD, the JDU, and Congress received support from 69% of Muslims, while the NDA received support from only 6% of Muslims. The split between the RJD and the JDU in 2018, and the alliance between the JDU and the RJD, may have led to the JDU's gain credibility among Muslim voters.

In 2020, the RJD (led by the NDA) remained internal, with only 1% of Muslims supporting it. The RJD-led Mahagathabandhan received 76% of the Muslim vote, a significant increase compared to 2018. This clearly suggests that the NDA comprising the JDU and the RJD as the main partners has never been the beneficiary of the Muslim vote. Even if Muslims are unhappy or angry with the passage of the Waaf (Amendment) Act, it may not adversely affect the political prospects of the NDA in Bihar.

While the Waaf (Amendment) Act has undoubtedly sparked discontent among Muslims in Bihar and across India, the political repercussions in Bihar may be limited. Voting data shows that the JDU-RJD alliance has never been a primary choice for Muslim voters, except during the brief 2018 alliance between the RJD and Congress. Thus, while the controversy may deepen characterisation, it is unlikely to significantly shift electoral dynamics in Bihar.

Narayan Kumar and Anshu Malik are senior editors of CHS.

Indians fear fake news but are less concerned about press freedom

In India, the share of people who believe that media freedom exists is higher than the share of people who believe it is important

DATA POINT

Sambari Research
 | **Global Media Freedom**

In India, while there is widespread anxiety about misinformation and fake news, people largely do not attribute it to government influence. Instead, a relatively large share do not mind greater state censorship, according to the latest survey by the Pew Research Center. The survey data suggests that while there is a relatively large share of respondents who believe that the state is free from state censorship and supports greater state control over the press. In other words, the data indicates that many citizens share misgivings about the state's role in free from state censorship and supports greater state control over the press. In other words, the data indicates that many citizens share misgivings about the state's role in free from state censorship and supports greater state control over the press. In other words, the data indicates that many citizens share misgivings about the state's role in free from state censorship and supports greater state control over the press.

In India, 63% of the respondents said that made-up news and information is a very big problem in their country. In Bangladesh, South Korea, Chile, Colombia and Thailand, over 70% of the respondents felt this. In Peru, Philippines, Turkey, Greece and India, more than 65% or more of the respondents said so. The concern for fake news was lowest in Singapore, Poland, Sweden, Netherlands and Norway. Chart 2 shows the share of respondents who said that it is very or somewhat important for the media to report news without state or government censorship. The share was above 90% in Greece, Sweden, the U.S., and 11 other countries between 80% and 90%. In 13 countries, and between 70% and 80%. In the remaining 10 countries, less than 70% of the respondents emphasised the need for a media free of state censorship.

Chart 3 shows the share of respondents who said that the media is currently completely/clearly free in their country. India, Sweden, Netherlands, Philippines, Ghana, Australia, Kenya, and Thailand are the eight countries where 80% or more of the respondents said that the media is now completely or somewhat free. In Chile and Greece, less than 60% felt so.

Reporters Without Borders. While India has consistently ranked low on RCB since 2013, the situation has worsened significantly in recent years.

Chart 1 shows the share of respondents who said that made-up news and information is a very big problem in their country. In Bangladesh, South Korea, Chile, Colombia and Thailand, over 70% of the respondents felt this. In Peru, Philippines, Turkey, Greece and India, more than 65% or more of the respondents said so. The concern for fake news was lowest in Singapore, Poland, Sweden, Netherlands and Norway.

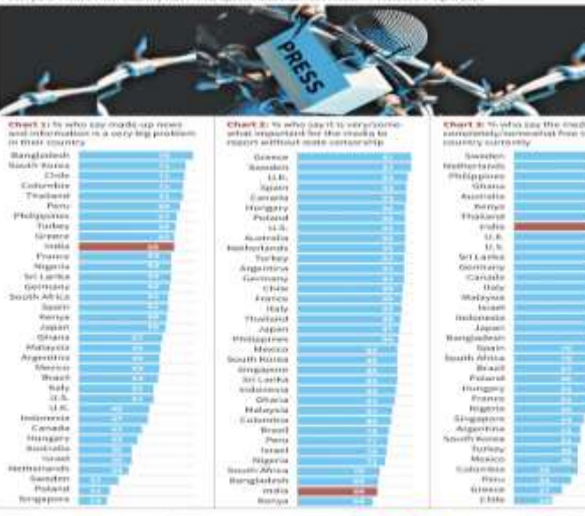
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Reading Charts 2 and 3 together offers a different perspective. India and Kenya are the only two countries where a larger share of respondents believe that the media is free (80% or more), while a smaller share (less than 70%) emphasises the importance of media freedom. In other words, there is a 'press freedom gap', which means the share of people who feel media freedom is important is greater than the share who believe it exists. In contrast, in India and Kenya, this gap is reversed.

Dangerous dichotomy

The data for the charts were taken from Pew Research Center's 'Press Expression: Fear as Important Globally, but Not So in India' survey. The survey was conducted in 13 countries between April 2021 and April 2022.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 29, 1973

Emergency steps to augment water supply in Madras

Madras, April 28. The Tamil Nadu Government has decided to take a number of emergency measures to augment the water supply in Madras for mitigating the hardship caused to the people on account of the unprecedented drought.

These measures, which include tapping of new ground water sources and diversion of water used by some major industries to the Marshall couples, were decided upon at a conference convened by the Chief Minister at the Secretariat this morning. It was attended by the Local Administration Minister, the Chief Secretary to Government, the Chief Engineer, P.W.D., Madras, and the Chief Engineer, P.W.D., Karaikal, among the citizens that the Government and the Corporation would spare no effort to alleviate their suffering and requested to them not to get laxly over the situation.

One of the measures announced by the Chief Minister was to request the Madras Dornier and Madras Fertilisers — two large industrial units in Madras — to advance their annual maintenance shutdowns so that two to three million gallons of water now contained by them daily could be made available to the City during their closure period.

He said the Water Supply and Drainage Board would be asked to take immediate steps to sink large wells in the Thiruvannamalai coastal area and make available an additional one to two million gallons daily in May.

The other measures contemplated by the Government include sinking of more open wells in different parts of the City for the use of the public.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 29, 1920

American gold for Britain

New York, April 28: The Federal Reserve Bank has arranged with other banks to place two hundred million dollars worth of gold at the disposal of the Bank of England if desired, in connection with the establishment of a free gold market in London. It is understood that a further million will be supplied by the Morgan.

Dangerous dichotomy

The data for the charts were taken from Pew Research Center's 'Free Expression Seen as Important Globally, but Not Everyone Thinks Their Country Has Press, Speech and Internet Freedoms' released in April 2025



Chart 1: % who say made-up news and information is a very big problem in their country

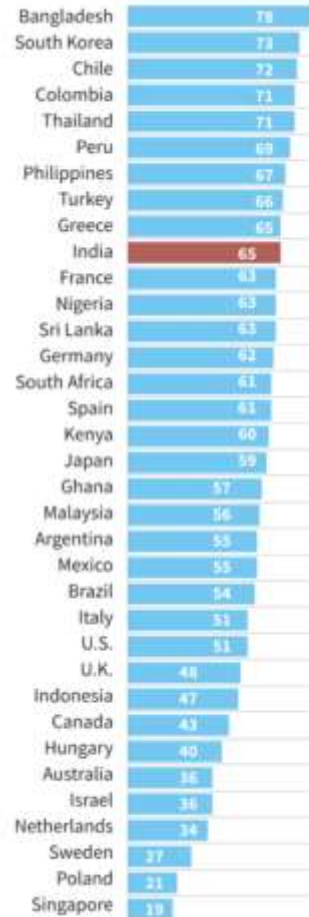


Chart 2: % who say it is very/somewhat important for the media to report without state censorship

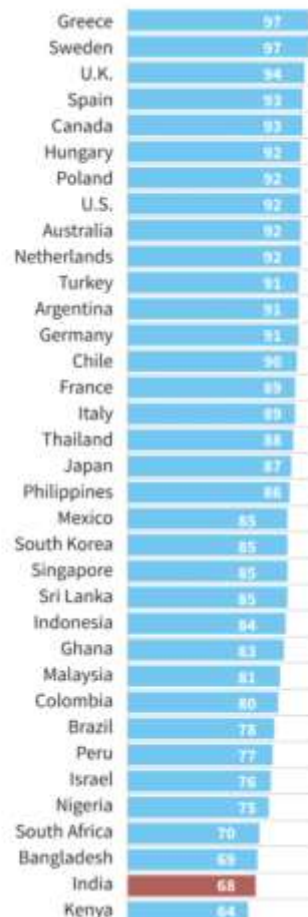
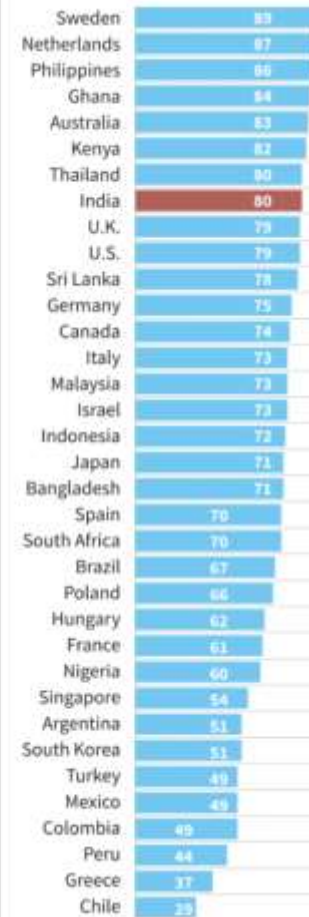


Chart 3: % who say the media is completely/somewhat free in their country currently



PRODIGIOUS
Suryavanshi becomes youngest centurion in T20 cricket



Vaidhury Suryavanshi smashed the fastest century (88 balls) by an Indian and the fastest (56.7) in T20 cricket by a Pune Warrior on April 20 in the IPL. The Rajasthan Royals batter is the youngest (19 years 326) to score a century in T20s, breaking Gaurav Munot's record (19y 286d) for France against Netherlands in 2022.

SIMPLY AMAZING
Incredible innings... one of the best I have seen, says Jaiswal



Incredible innings... one of the best I have seen, says Jaiswal. He played some amazing shots... he knows what he's doing in the nets. He has the game and temperament to succeed at the highest level - Sachin Tendulkar on Vaidhury Suryavanshi.

YOUNG AND BOLD
'Don't fear about bowlers targeting me... not thinking about all that'



I don't see the ground set-ups, I just focus on the ball. Batting with confidence allows me confidence because he keeps pushing and keeps giving me advice, it is like a dream to score a century in the IPL. There is no fear about bowlers targeting me as I'm not thinking about all that, I am just focusing on playing - Vaidhury Suryavanshi.

POWERPLAY
It was Suryavanshi's day, his hitting was tremendous; Gill



Gujarat Titans skipper Shubman Gill said the day belonged to Vaidhury Suryavanshi. "It was Suryavanshi's day, his hitting was tremendous and he made ball one of it, I think they took the game away from us in the PowerPlay. Credit to them for that," said Gill after the eight-wicket loss to Rajasthan Royals.

Suryavanshi announces his arrival in Royal style

The 16-year-old smashes a 35-ball hundred and adds 166 with Jaiswal for the opening wicket to make short work of the 210-run target; Gill and Butler's knocks go in vain for the Gujarat outfit

IPL 14
P.K. Aithi Kumar
JALPAI

Some nights are magical. So magical, they defy belief. Monday was one such night. It was a starless night, though. But that didn't matter. One of the potential superstars of cricket lit up the Saval Man Singh Stadium, and well beyond.

Vaidhury Suryavanshi played one of the most stunning knocks in the history of the IPL to help Rajasthan Royals score a remarkable — eight-wicket victory against Gujarat Titans. The host chased down GT's 209 for four with 4.3 overs to spare.

The 16-year-old also became the league's youngest centurion (81, 88, 76, 100). And it was the second fastest hundred (55 balls).

Yes, the records, the numbers. They matter, but not as much as the precocious way he batted or the joy it gave to the viewer.

Suryavanshi was confident way beyond his years, as he destroyed one of the best attacks in the tournament. He was particularly severe on the leg-side, but one of his best shots came over long-off, against Praveen Chaudhary.

He pulled off Washington Sundar deep square-

leg was another sensational one. He, in fact, died mostly in boundaries. The only bowler who made him pause was Rashid Khan. Suryavanshi's opening-wicket stand with fellow left-hander Yashuvi Jaiswal (73 not out, 40s, 3s, 4s) was worth 166, which came off in less than 12 overs. By the time his incredible knock was finally ended by a Yorker from Praveen, he had taken the side closer to what would only be the third win of the season.

Every GT fielder wanted to congratulate the boy, as he walked towards his dressing room, where he got even coach Rahul Dravid's nod.

Earlier, it was yet again the magnificent top three that delivered for GT: R. Sai Sudharsan (59, 30s, 4s, 1s), and Shubman Gill (84, 50s, 5s, 4s) added 163 for the first wicket. They have together made 541 this year. Then Jos Butler (55 not out, 20s, 3s, 4s) made the return to his home ground for seven seasons' count.

What nobody counted on was an out-of-the-ordinary knock that would come from a teenager.

Next assignment

19:00 May 1, 2022
Jalpa, 5:30 p.m.
GT, May 2, 2022
Amalner, 7:30 p.m.



Outstriking display: Suryavanshi destroyed the Titans attack — one of the best in the tournament — with an outstanding knock. (S. VISWANATHAN)

SCOREBOARD

GUJARAT TITANS
R. Sai Sudharsan c Praveen Chaudhary 59 (20s, 4s, 1s), Shubman Gill c Praveen Chaudhary 84 (20s, 5s, 4s), Jos Butler (not out) 55 (20s, 3s, 4s), Washington Sundar c Harbhajan Singh 13 (0s, 2s), Rahul Tewari (not out) 10 (2s), Archer 16 (5s, 1s), M. Shubman Khan (not out) 5 (2s, 1s), Karan 1 (1s, 1s, 1s). Total (for four wickets) 209.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-89 (Sai Sudharsan, 16.5 overs), 2-117 (Gill, 18.4), 3-169 (Washington, 18.4), 4-207 (Tewari, 19.3).

ROYALS BOWLING
Archer 4-0-40-1, Chaudhary 4-0-33-2, Yashuvi 3-0-38-0, Sundar 2-0-31-1, Praveen 1-0-14-0, Harbhajan 4-0-39-0.

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Vaidhury Jaiswal (not out) 73 (20s, 4s, 2s), Vaidhury Suryavanshi 100 (55 balls, 7s, 1s), Harbhajan Singh 13 (0s, 2s, 1s), Jos Butler 55 (20s, 3s, 4s), Praveen (not out) 32 (17s, 2s, 2s), Karan 1 (1s, 1s). Total (for four wickets) 210.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-88 (Suryavanshi, 11.5), 2-171 (Butler, 12.3).

TIANS BOWLING
Singh 2-0-28-0, Shubman (Impact Player) 3-0-36-0, Washington 2-0-24-1, Praveen 4-0-47-1, Rashid 4-0-24-1, Karan 1-0-20-0, Sai Sudharsan 1-0-18-0.

Team: RR
PM: Suryavanshi. Royals also by right wickets with 29 deliveries to spare.

Suryavanshi is a special talent and needs to be nurtured properly

P.K. Aithi Kumar
JALPAI

Not since Sachin Tendulkar smashed Abdul Qadir for four sixes in an over in an exhibition match against Pakistan, way back in 1989, has many teen-aged batters caused so much excitement in Vaidhury Suryavanshi and a man Monday night here at the Saval Man Singh Stadium.

There may never be another Tendulkar, and one thing does not make a great batter, even if that thing happens to be an astonishing 35-ball 101, and the hundred by the youngest ever batter in the IPL, at the age of 16.

But Suryavanshi is clearly a special talent. He has to be nurtured properly.

Remarkable feats
He is too good for his age, even for someone older.

He generates power, has commendable — bar every right and has a knack to get into the right position quickly to play his shots. And he dares to take on the best of the bowlers.

Rajasthan Royals' batting coach Vikram Rathour

said what the world witnessed during the team's eight-wicket win against Gujarat Titans was something he and they all had been watching at the nets for the past few months.

"We knew what he was capable of and what kind of shots he was capable of playing," he said. "But to do it in front of this kind of crowd, in a situation like this and against a really, really good bowling attack, it was really special."

First impressions
Rathour recalled that everyone was impressed when Suryavanshi came for the first four months' mark.

"All of us knew we found something special," he said. "Our job was to nurture him and to bring him to this level. A lot of credit to him — he kept his nerve."

The former India opener said the youngster had a good head on his shoulders.

"He showed great temperament," he said. "Even in the first couple of games, he showed what he was capable of."

Cynosure: Even the opposition players were in awe of Suryavanshi's knock. (S. VISWANATHAN)

Points table

Team	M	W	L	T	NR	PPS	RRR
Royal Challengers	10	1	4	0	14	0.51	
Mumbai Indians	10	6	4	0	19	0.88	
Gujarat Titans	9	6	3	0	12	0.78	
Delhi Capitals	9	5	3	1	12	0.82	
Punjab Kings	9	5	3	1	11	0.77	
Lakshmi Super Giants	10	5	5	0	16	0.78	
Madhya Pradesh Warriors	9	5	4	0	7	0.71	
Rajasthan Royals	10	5	5	0	8	0.48	
Bombay Hyderabad	9	4	5	0	8	1.10	
Chennai Super Kings	9	3	7	0	4	1.30	

Spinners and surface in the spotlight as Capitals take on Knight Riders

Vivek Krishnan

An hour before Kolkata Knight Riders practice session was officially scheduled to begin at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Monday, Ravi Shastri and Varun Chakravarthy made their way to the middle and went about their bowling drills on a side pitch for close to an hour.

Without a batter at the other end, the two mystery bowlers were directed to hit spins in the good and full lengths, on which orange markers were placed, under the gaze of spin bowling coach Carl Lumb.

Prelude
It served as a prelude to the instrumental roles they may have to play when KKR faces Delhi Capitals on Tuesday.

Particularly if the surface plays anything like the one that was used for Sunday's game between DC and Royal Challengers Bangalore, KKR will have to rely on its two spinners to step up and make it count. So far this season, both have logged decent num-



Fun time: KKR players Varun and Ravi in a relaxed mood in mind ahead of the game against DC. (S. VISWANATHAN)

Race for the caps

Player	Wicket	Runs	SR	OB	SR
R. Sai Sudharsan (GT)	9	406	82	130.00	9
Rashid Khan (RR)	10	442	73	128.67	9
Suryavanshi (RR)	10	423	67	109.44	9

Player	Wicket	Runs	SR	OB	SR
Harbhajan Singh (RR)	10	16	4.25	4.4	1
Praveen Chaudhary (GT)	9	17	4.93	7.00	1
Navdeep Vaidya (New ICC)	9	14	4.18	6.03	1

Fig for RR-GT match on April 26

Today's match

Delhi Capitals vs Rajasthan Royals

12:00, 7:30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 12

On 15 (13) (16)

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Delhi Capitals led seven matches, 2018. Last on 24th January 2018, 5th Match, 1-0-18-0.

matches while conceding 7.75 runs per over. KKR, which is negotiating with three sides to nine matches, is in desperate need of a morale-booster. On account of the potential threat posed by Narine and Varun, DC mentor Kevin Pietersen said after the defeat to KKR that his team wouldn't want a star-bat pitch. In Rishabh Yadav, Axar Patel and Vijay Nigam, the host has the spinners to trouble the KKR batsmen. But for the likes of E.L. Barath, Faldu Hossain, Karan Nair and Tristan Stubbs in DC's batting unit, a slug-gate pitch isn't conducive to the nature of their strategy.

PRODIGIOUS

Suryavanshi becomes youngest centurion in T20 cricket



R.V. MOORTHY

▲ Vaibhav Suryavanshi smashed the fastest century (35 balls) by an Indian and the second fastest (Chris Gayle: 30b vs Pune Warriors, 2013) in the IPL. The Rajasthan Royals batter is the youngest (14y 32d) to score a century in T20s, breaking Gustav McKeon's record (18y 280d for France against Switzerland in 2022).

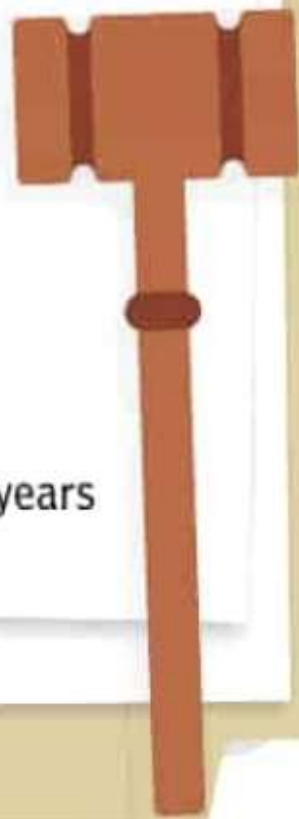
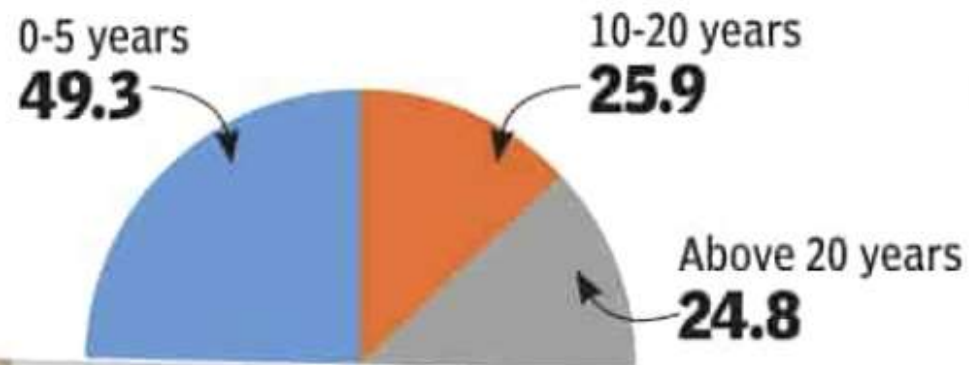
Fastest Centuries in International Cricket (T20I, ODI, Test)

Format	Player	Balls	Opponent	Venue	Year
T20I	David Miller (SA)	35	Bangladesh	Potchefstroom	2017
	Rohit Sharma (IND)		SL	Indore	2017
	S. Sudharsan (IND, unofficial)		(Unofficial)		
ODI	AB de Villiers (SA)	31	West Indies	Johannesburg	2015
Test	Brendon McCullum (NZ)	54	Australia	Christchurch	2016

In India, Justice Delayed Is Justice Delivered

Except Tripura, Sikkim and Meghalaya, where more than 90% of cases are decided within five years, most states have a long list of pending cases. In Allahabad high court, over 40% of cases are more than 20 years old

Cases pending in high courts by duration, %

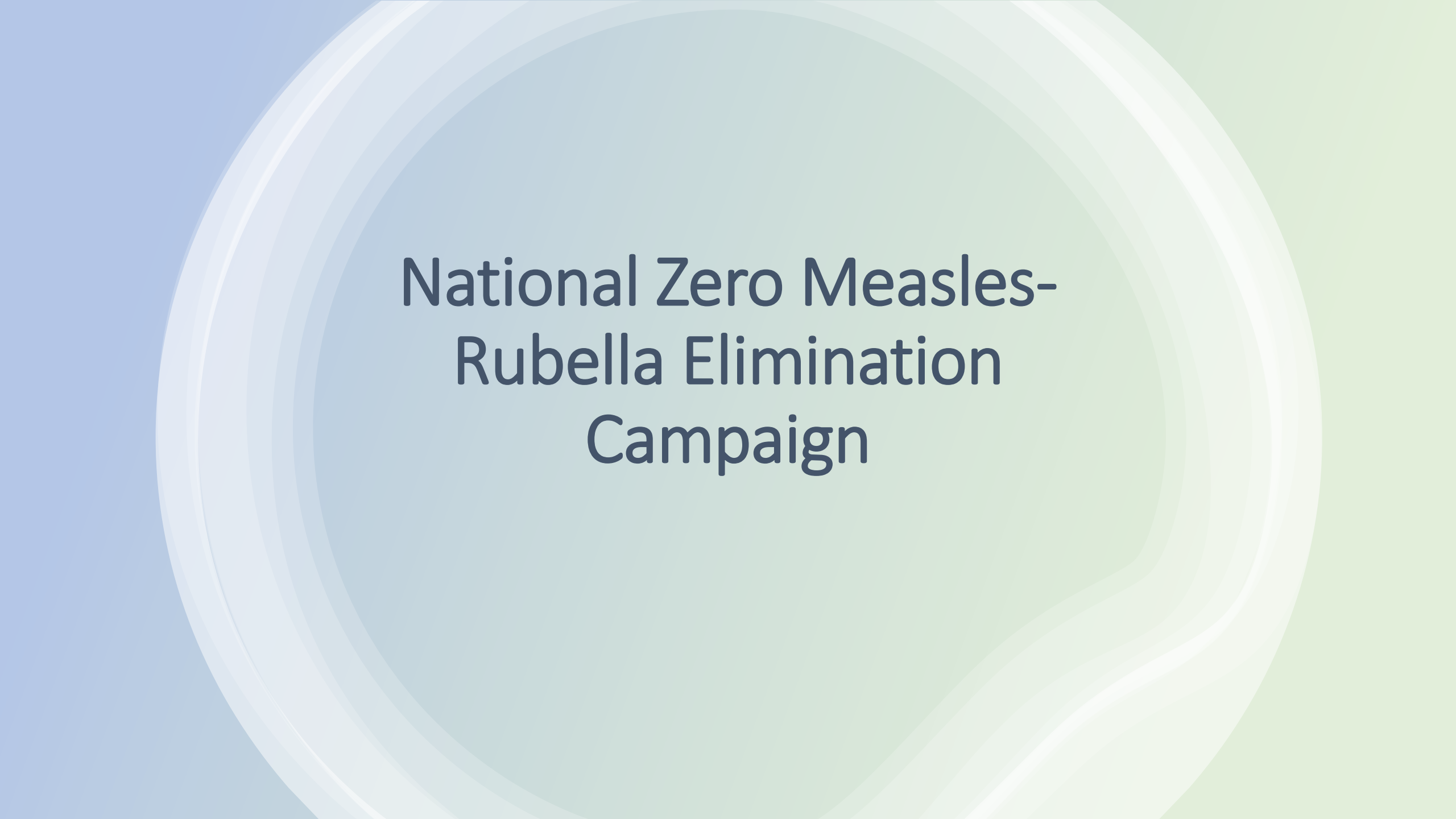


Rank	High Court	Year Established	Location	Jurisdiction (States/UTs)
1	Calcutta High Court	1862	Kolkata, WB	West Bengal & Andaman & Nicobar Islands
2	Bombay High Court	1862	Mumbai, MH	Maharashtra, Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli
3	Madras High Court	1862	Chennai, TN	Tamil Nadu & Puducherry
4	Allahabad High Court	1866	Prayagraj, UP	Uttar Pradesh
5	Patna High Court	1916	Patna, Bihar	Bihar & Jharkhand (before Jharkhand got its own HC)

Newest High Court: Andhra Pradesh High Court, re-established in 2019 in Amaravati.

Largest in Judges: Allahabad High Court

Jurisdiction Over UTs: Some High Courts serve multiple states/UTs, e.g., Bombay High Court.

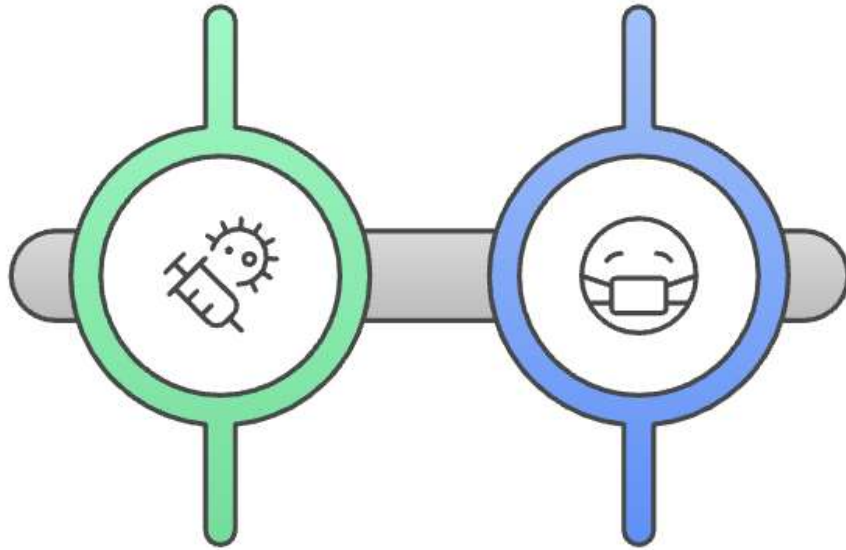


**National Zero Measles-
Rubella Elimination
Campaign**

National Zero Measles-Rubella Elimination Campaign --India's Measles-Rubella Elimination Journey

24-30 April

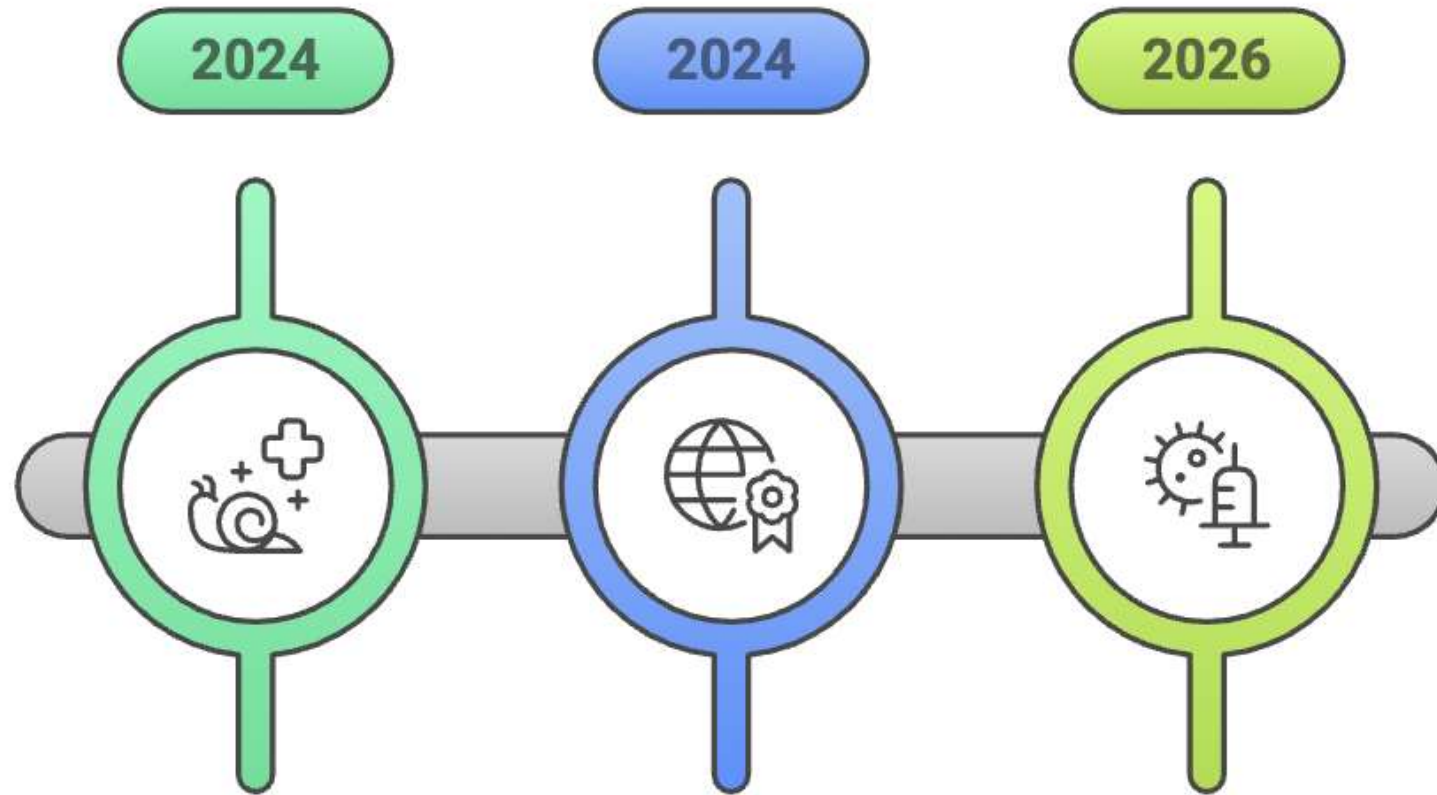
2025-26



Launch of National Zero Measles-Rubella Elimination Campaign

Target year for Measles and Rubella elimination

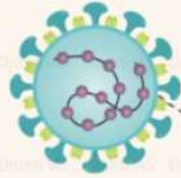
India's Journey to Measles and Rubella Elimination



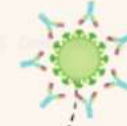
Measles cases dropped by 73% and rubella cases by 17%

India received the M-R Champion Award

Target to eliminate measles and rubella



Measles



ABOUT



- **Caused by a virus** in the paramyxovirus family
- Human disease; **not known to occur in animals**
- The virus **infects the respiratory tract**, then spreads throughout the body
- **Measles Immunization Day** is observed on **16th March**

TRANSMISSION

- **Contagious** Disease
- Passes through **direct contact** and through the **air**

VULNERABLE GROUPS

- **Any unvaccinated person**
- More likely among **children under 5 years**

SYMPTOMS

- High fever, rashes, blindness, encephalitis, severe diarrhea, can cause death also

TREATMENT

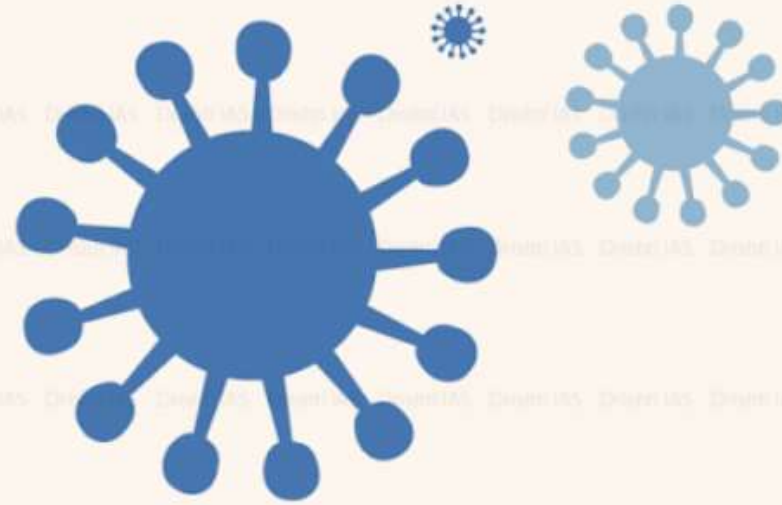
- **No specific antiviral treatment**
- Complications from measles can be reduced through supportive care





VACCINATION

- **The measles vaccine is often incorporated with rubella and/or mumps vaccines-**
Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) or
Measles-Mumps-Rubella-Varicella (MMRV)



INITIATIVES

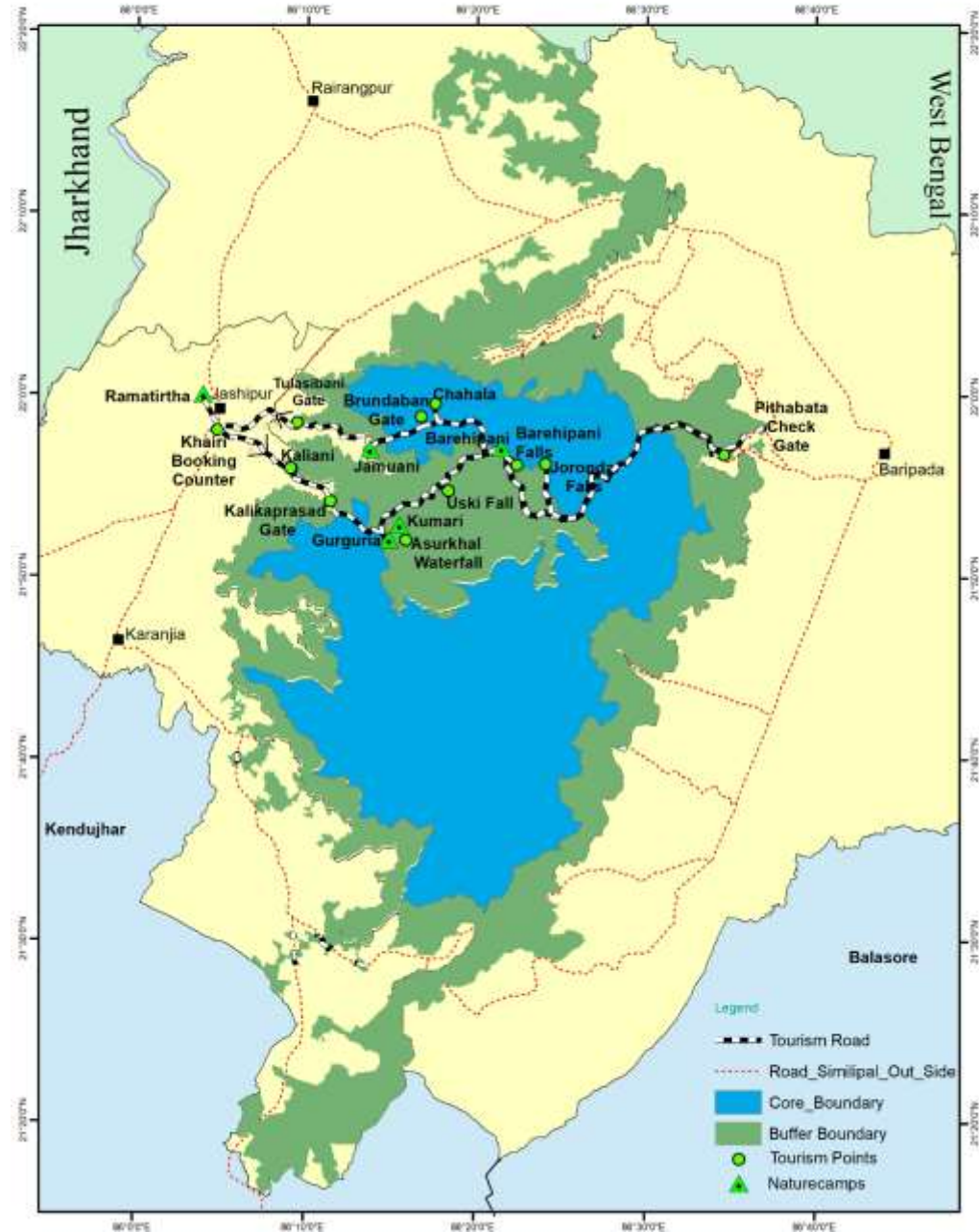
- **Global:** The **Measles & Rubella Initiative** (M&R Initiative)
 - The **Measles and Rubella Strategic Framework 2021–2030** envisions “a world free from measles and rubella”
- **Indian:** Measles vaccination is given under **Mission Indradhanush**

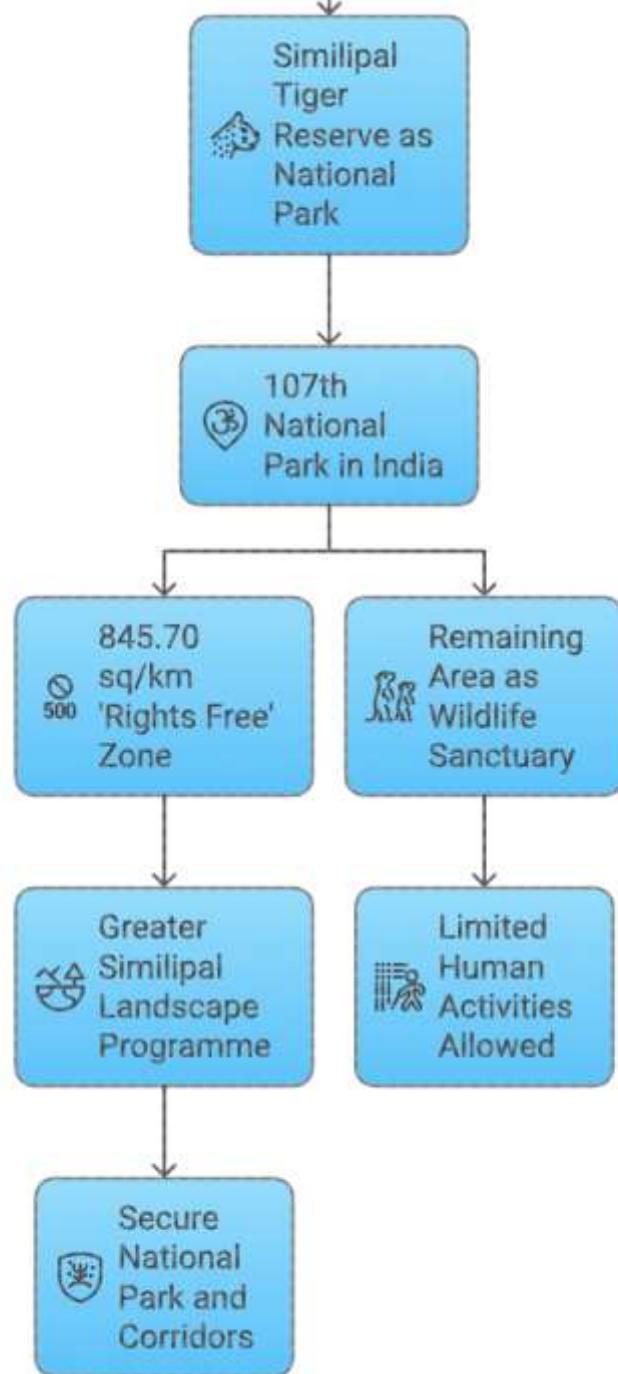
The background features two large, overlapping, curved lines. One line is a light blue color and the other is a light green color. They are positioned in the top right and bottom left corners of the page, framing the central text.

Similipal National Park

Similipal Tiger Reserve

Eco- Tourism Map

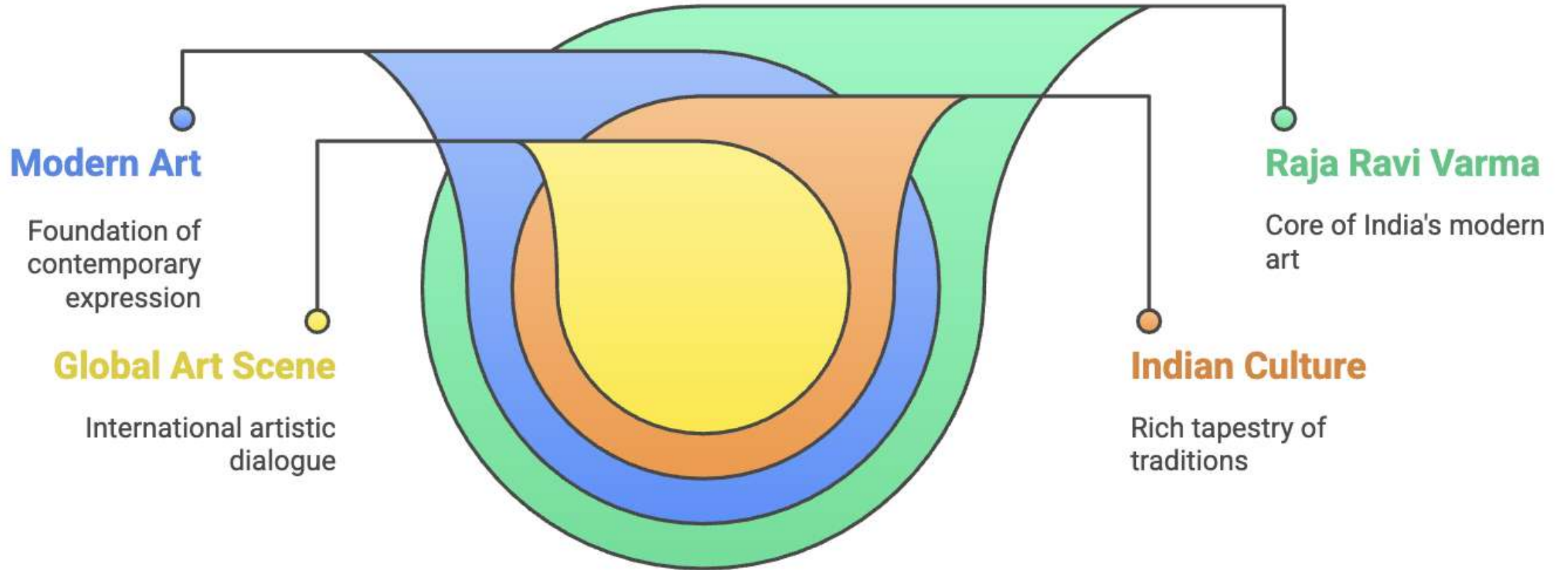




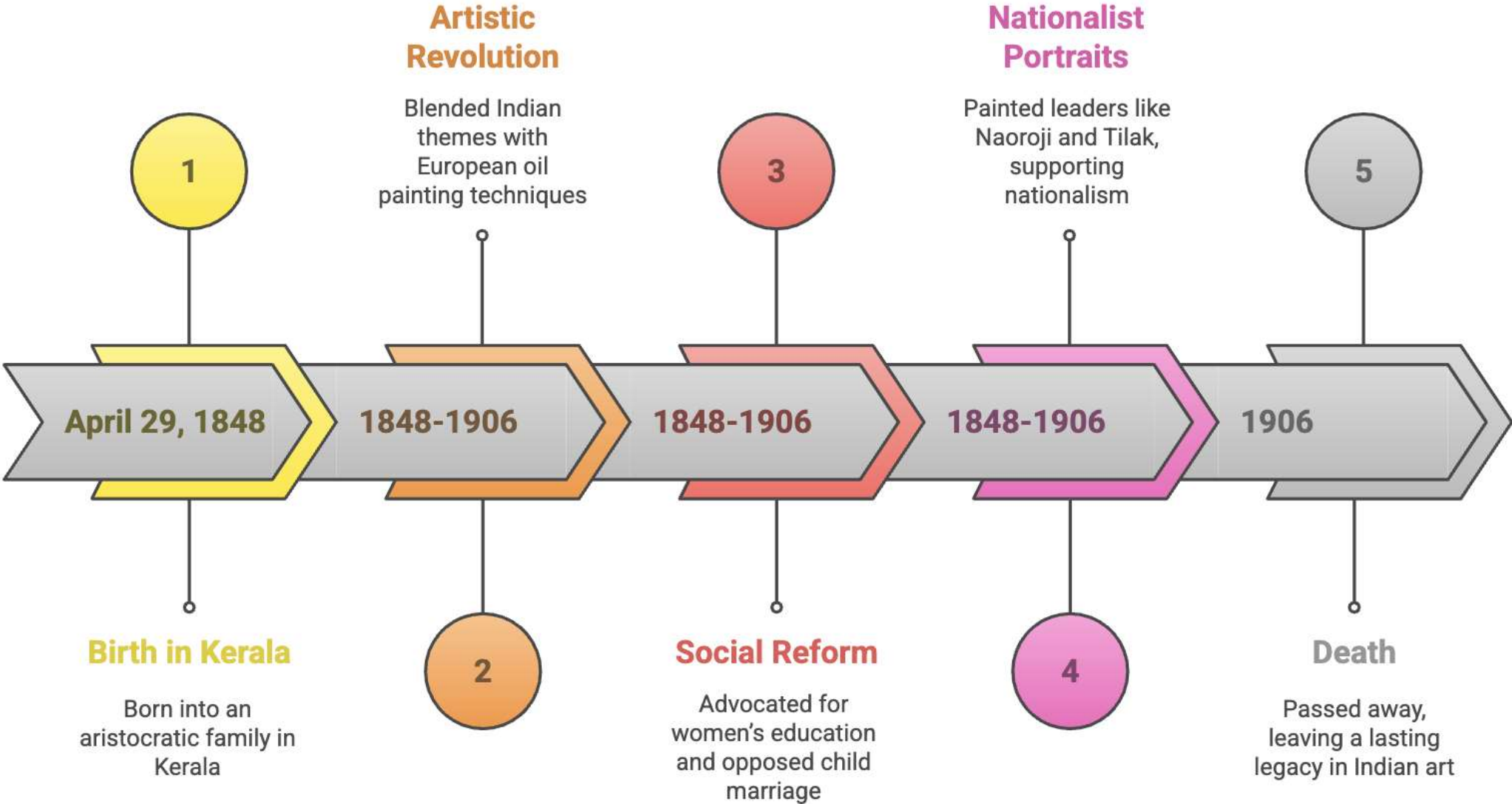
The background features two large, overlapping, curved lines. One line is a light blue color and the other is a light green color. They are positioned in the top-left and bottom-right corners of the frame, creating a sense of movement and depth.

Raja Ravi Varma

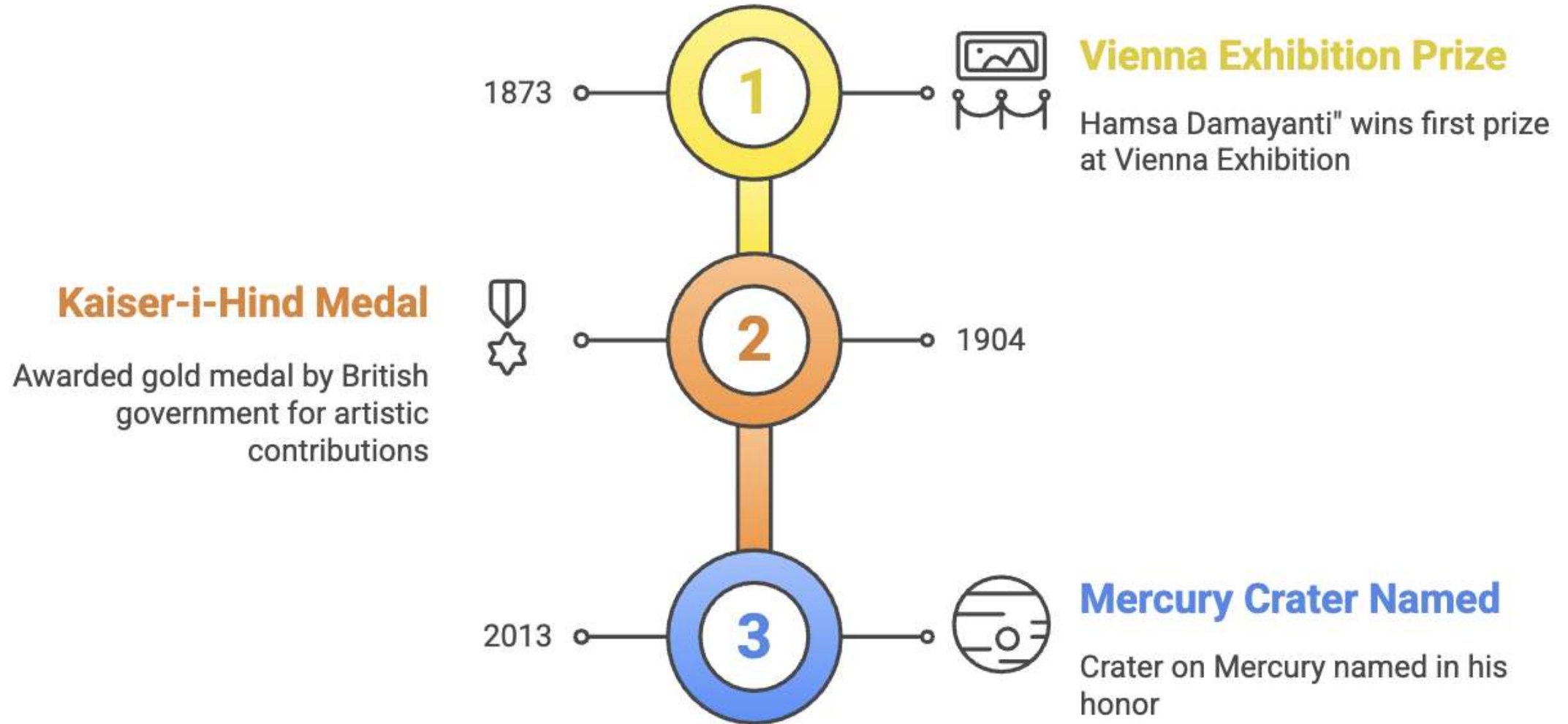
Raja Ravi Varma's Artistic Legacy



Key Milestones in the Life of Raja Ravi Varma



Major Milestones in Raja Ravi Varma's Career



A decorative graphic consisting of several concentric, overlapping circular bands. The left side of the graphic is primarily blue, transitioning into green on the right side. The bands have a soft, blurred appearance, creating a sense of depth and movement.

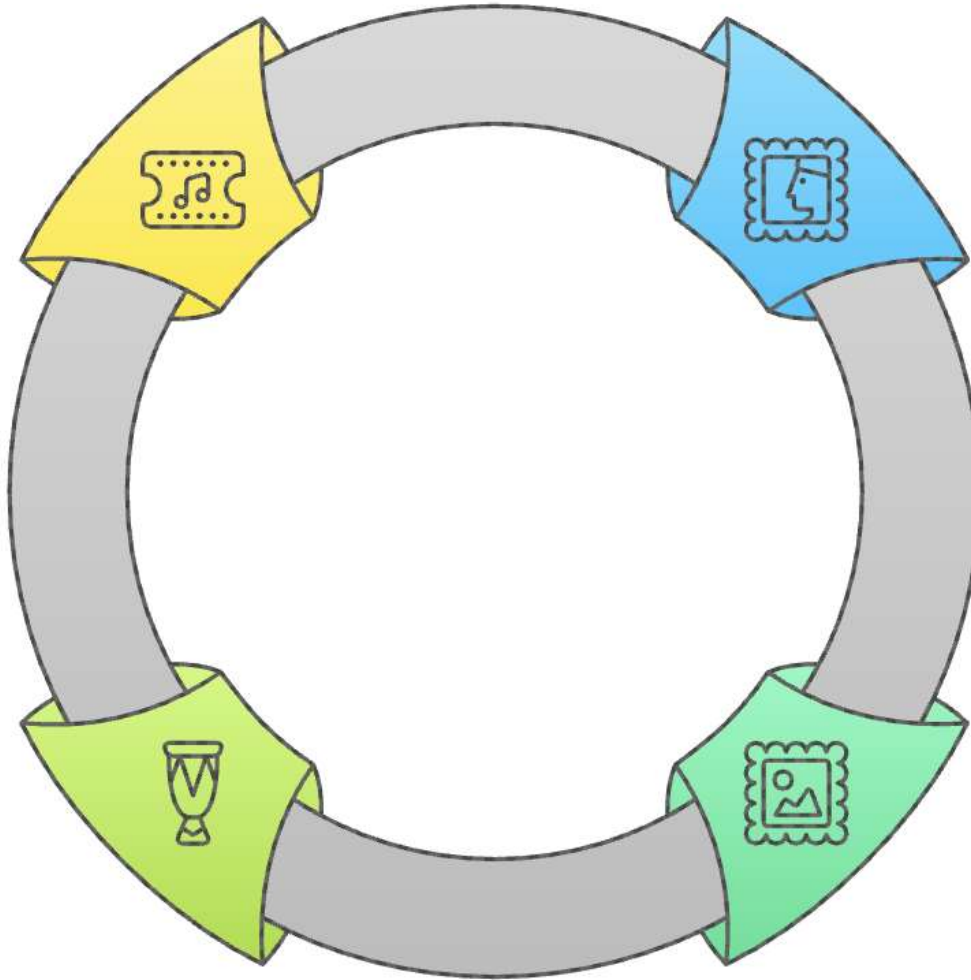
Pandit Chatur Lal



Celebrating Pandit Chatur Lal's Legacy

Western Audience

The audience that Pandit Chatur Lal introduced to Indian music



Department of Posts

The entity issuing the commemorative stamp

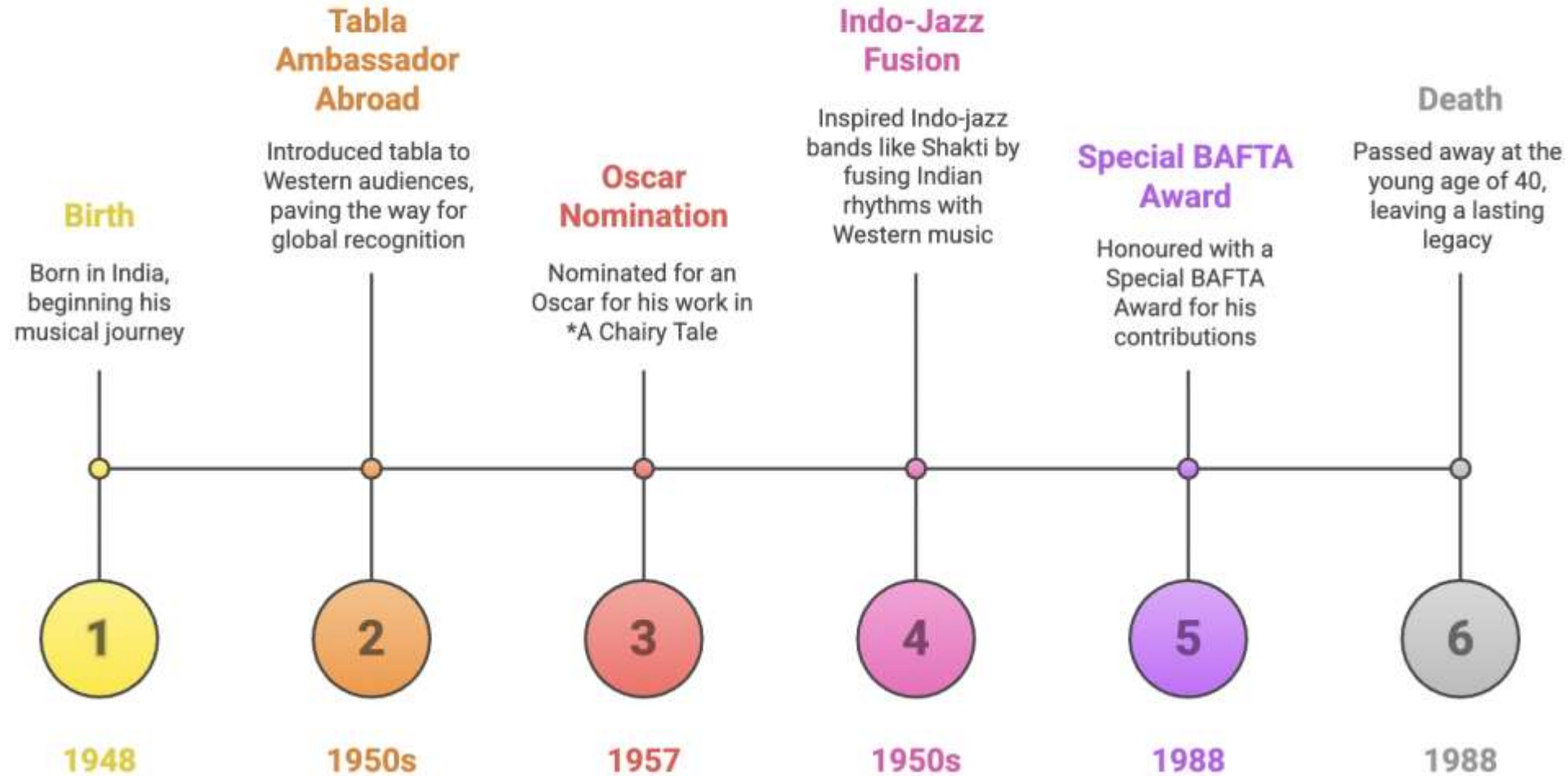
Commemorative Stamp

A special stamp honoring Pandit Chatur Lal

Indian Percussion Music

The genre Pandit Chatur Lal popularized

Key Milestones in the Life of a Tabla Pioneer



Consider the following statements regarding the India-France Rafale-M Agreement:

1. Rafale-M jets are specifically designed for naval carrier operations.
2. The current deal includes complete manufacturing of all 26 jets in India under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.
3. Deliveries under the agreement are set to be completed by 2026.
4. The Rafale-M jets will replace the Indian Navy's MiG-29K fleet.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 4 only
- B) 1, 2, and 4 only
- C) 1, 3, and 4 only
- D) 1 only

Consider the following statements regarding India's military expenditure in 2024 according to SIPRI:

1. India ranked third globally in military expenditure after the United States and China.
2. India's military spending was nearly nine times that of Pakistan.
3. India's share in Asia's total military spending was more than 50%.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Consider the following statements regarding the India-France Rafale-M Agreement:

1. Rafale-M jets are specifically designed for naval carrier operations.
2. The current deal includes complete manufacturing of all 26 jets in India under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.
3. Deliveries under the agreement are set to be completed by 2026.
4. The Rafale-M jets will replace the Indian Navy's MiG-29K fleet.

• Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 4 only
- B) 1, 2 and 4 only
- C) 1, 3 and 4 only
- D) 1 only

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- A) 2 only
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- C) 1 and 2 only
- D) 1, 2 and 3

Consider the following about the National Zero Measles-Rubella Elimination Campaign:

- 1.It aims to eliminate measles and rubella by 2025.
- 2.The campaign is led by the Ministry of Education.

- **Which is/are correct?**

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Consider the following statements about Similipal National Park:

- 1.It is located in Odisha.
- 2.It is part of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites list.
- 3.It is famous for melanistic tigers.

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

- A) 1 and 2 only
- B) 1 and 3 only
- C) 2 and 3 only
- D) All of the above

Consider the following about Raja Ravi Varma:

- 1.He was a pioneer in combining Indian themes with European techniques.
- 2.He is best known for his oil paintings depicting scenes from Hindu mythology.

- **Which is/are correct?**

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2



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Word of the day

Lope:


a slow pace of running; a smooth three-beat gait; between a trot and a gallop; run easily

Synonyms: jog, trot, canter

Usage: *The horses loped easily across the fields.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/lopepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ləʊp/

A blurred background image showing a group of people in a meeting or conference room, many of whom are clapping. In the foreground, a hand is reaching out towards the center. The overall scene is bright and positive.

Thank you
guys.
