

Daily Current

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“I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book.”

— Groucho Marx

SHAKEBITE CAPITAL
What India must get right
With efforts to plug the data gap in snakebite fatalities, India is set to modernise and improve the handling of a long-neglected problem
MAGAZINE PAGE 1



Rafael Grossi, the nuclear policeman in the middle of a storm
PROFILES PAGE 9

What are the lessons from the Telangana blast?
FAQ PAGE 8

Gill smashes another century, shatters more records at Edgbaston
SPORT PAGE 13

INSIDE
Bihar SIR: More than 1 cr. voters submit forms
NEW DELHI
The Election Commission on Saturday said that the special intensive revision is under way in full swing in Bihar. A press statement issued by EC said that as of 6 p.m. on July 5, enumeration forms were received from 1,04,16,545 electors. > PAGE 4

Ex-UGC chief among accused in medical scam
NEW DELHI/BHOPLAL
The CBI has booked several educationalists, Health Ministry officials, the National Health Authority, National Medical Commission inspection teams and a godman head for conspiracy to sabotage the inspection process for private medical colleges. > PAGE 5

India is fourth 'most equal' country: report
NEW DELHI
Inequality in India has come down significantly between 2011-12 and 2022-23, making it the fourthmost equal country globally, according to a World Bank report. This is in addition to a sharp decline in extreme poverty. > PAGE 3

Amit Shah lays foundation for co-op university
MUMBAI
Union Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for India's first national cooperative university, advocating for the inclusion of cooperative education at an earlier stage, in secondary school curricula. > PAGE 5

Nehal Modi, co-accused in PNB scam case, arrested in the U.S.

He is accused of aiding his brother and economic offender Nirav Modi in laundering money and destroying key digital evidence, and intimidating witnesses; the arrest was made pursuant to a joint extradition request submitted by ED and CBI

Deevash K. Pandey

NEW DELHI

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According to the complaint filed by the U.S. prosecution, the extradition proceedings are being pursued on two counts – alleged money laundering under Section 3 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act and alleged criminal conspiracy under Sections 120-B and 201 of the erstwhile Indian Penal Code. "Nehal Modi is wanted in India in connection with the multibillion dollar PNB fraud case, one of the largest banking scams in the country's history. Investigations by the ED and CBI have revealed that Nehal Modi played a key role in laundering proceeds of crime on behalf of Nirav Modi, who is also facing extradition from the U.K.," the official said.

Mr. Nehal Modi is alleged to have assisted in concealing and transferring large sums of illicit funds through a web of shell companies and overseas transactions.

The next date of hearing in the extradition proceedings is scheduled for July 12. The accused may apply

Serious charges

Nehal Modi allegedly took away diamonds worth \$6 million from Hong Kong & 50 kg of gold from Dubai

Sept 2020: Interpol issues a Red Notice against him
May 2020: his profile on Interpol website disappears briefly. It was restored and again taken down later

March 2023: Following a series of queries on various issues, India seeks his extradition from the U.S.

Wanted figure: Image of Nehal Modi that had appeared on Interpol website with a Red Notice in 2020. It is missing

He is also accused of intimidating witnesses, tampering them in confinement, and forcing them to sign forged papers

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Mr. Nirav Modi is currently lodged in a U.K. jail. The ED had earlier found that Mr. Nehal Modi allegedly managed two companies for his half-brother. These enterprises received \$50 million from

Trump signs 12 trade letters to be sent out next week

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that he had signed 12 trade letters to be sent out next week ahead of an impending deadline for his tariffs to take effect.

His comments come days before steeper duties are set to take effect on dozens of economies. Countries have been pushing to strike deals that would help them avoid these elevated duties.

Full Report > PAGE 12

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Full Report > PAGE 12

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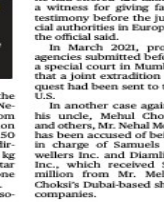
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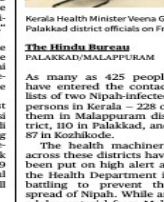
Return journey

Charlot tri: Devotees near chariots of sibling deities Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhadra on Saturday as they return to the Shree Jagannath temple from the Shree Gundicha temple during the Bahuda yatra festival at Puri in Odisha. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



3 Kerala districts on high alert over Nipah; 425 being screened

Kerala Health Minister Veena George during an online meeting with Palakkad district officials on Friday evening. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



The Hindu Bureau TALAKKAD/MALAPPURAM

As many as 425 people have entered the contact lists of two Nipah-infected persons in Kerala – 228 of them in Malappuram district, 110 in Palakkad, and 87 in Kozhikode.

The health machinery across these districts have been put on high alert as the Health Department is battling to prevent the spread of Nipah. While an adolescent girl from Makkaraparamba near Malappuram died on July 1, a 38-year-old woman from Thachanurkara in Palakkad district is battling for life at Moulana Hospital in Perinthalmanna.

Twelve persons are currently undergoing treatment in Malappuram – five of them in the intensive care unit. However, one of them tested negative for the infection. The results of the others are awaited.

In Palakkad, one person who came into contact with the infected woman is being treated in isolation. Of the 110 people on the contact list in Palakkad, 61 are health workers. In Kozhikode, all 87 on the list are health workers.

The Health Department will soon begin a fever survey of households within a 3-km radius of the infected persons' houses. Health Minister Veena George on Saturday said that psychological aid should be given

Central team

The Union Health Ministry is considering deploying the National Joint Outbreak Response Team (NJOERT) to Kerala to assist the government in implementing public health measures, sources said on Saturday.

The Central Surveillance Unit of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), NCDC, is in close contact with the State unit and is actively monitoring the situation, they added.

ANTIBODY SURVEILLANCE > PAGE 2

Industrialist and BJP leader Khemka shot dead in Patna

Amit Bhelari

PATNA

Prominent businessman and Bihar Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Gopal Khemka was shot dead at point blank range by unidentified bike-borne criminals outside his home in Patna late on Friday night.

Through the incident took place just 300 metres from a police station, police only reached the spot nearly 90 minutes later. Police are scanning CCTV camera footage of the murder. One person was de-

Gopal Khemka



Identified on Saturday and is being questioned by the police. A well-known industrialist, Khemka was also the owner of Magadh hospital

and a number of petrol pumps. His murder comes a few years after his son, Gaurang Khemka, was shot dead by criminals in the Hajipur industrial area of Vaishali district.

Patna Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kartikey Sharma has formed a special task force team to nab the criminals.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar held a high-level review meeting on the State's law and order situation at his official residence and was briefed on the murder by Bihar DGP Vinay Kumar.

India, Trinidad and Tobago sign multiple deals

Kallol Bhattacharjee

NEW DELHI

Trinidad and Tobago signed at least six agreements with India that will pave the way for India's financial and pharma sectors to emerge as major players in the Caribbean region.

As part of understanding reached during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit, Trinidad and Tobago also has announced that it will join India's global initiatives in Coalition of Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA). The two sides also



Warm welcome: Prime Minister Narendra Modi being greeted upon his arrival at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. PTI

signed an agreement on India's global initiative for the implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in Trinidad and Tobago.

"Through this MoU, the Government of India will provide grant funding for the implementation of QIPs in Trinidad and Tobago. The total value of the projects will not exceed \$50,000 for each project. A maxi-

mum of five projects will be offered in each financial year," a joint statement said, explaining the Quick Impact Projects.

Mr. Modi also declared that India will gift 2,000 laptops to school students in Trinidad and Tobago as gesture to support its Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar's "ambitious vision of digitising education".

Mr. Modi also gifted the first batch of \$1 million in agro-machinery to Trinidad and Tobago's National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) and declared support for millet

cultivation, seaweed fertilizer and natural farming.

Mr. Modi arrived in Argentina on Friday evening (local time) on a two-day visit during which he will hold talks with the country's top leadership to review ongoing cooperation and discuss ways to enhance bilateral partnership in key areas.

In Buenos Aires, he laid a wreath at the memorial of General Jose de San Martin, regarded as a national hero in Argentina, and was

peer received by President Javier Milei at Casa Rosada, the seat of Argentina government.

(With PTI inputs)

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- **Nehal Modi** allegedly took away diamonds worth **\$6 million** from Hong Kong & 50 kg of gold from Dubai
- He is also accused of **intimidating witnesses**, keeping them **in confinement**, and forcing them to **sign forged papers**

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Image of Nehal Modi that had appeared on Interpol website with a Red Notice in 2020.
FILE PHOTO

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Mr. Nirav Modi is currently lodged in a U.K. jail.

The ED had earlier found that Mr. Nehal Modi allegedly managed two companies for his half-brother. These enterprises received \$50 million from

dummy entities. After the scam was detected, Mr. Nehal Modi took away from Hong Kong \$6 million worth of diamonds, 150 boxes of pearls; UAE dirham 3.5 million; and 50 kg of gold from the Firestar Diamond FZE (Free Zone Establishment) in Dubai.

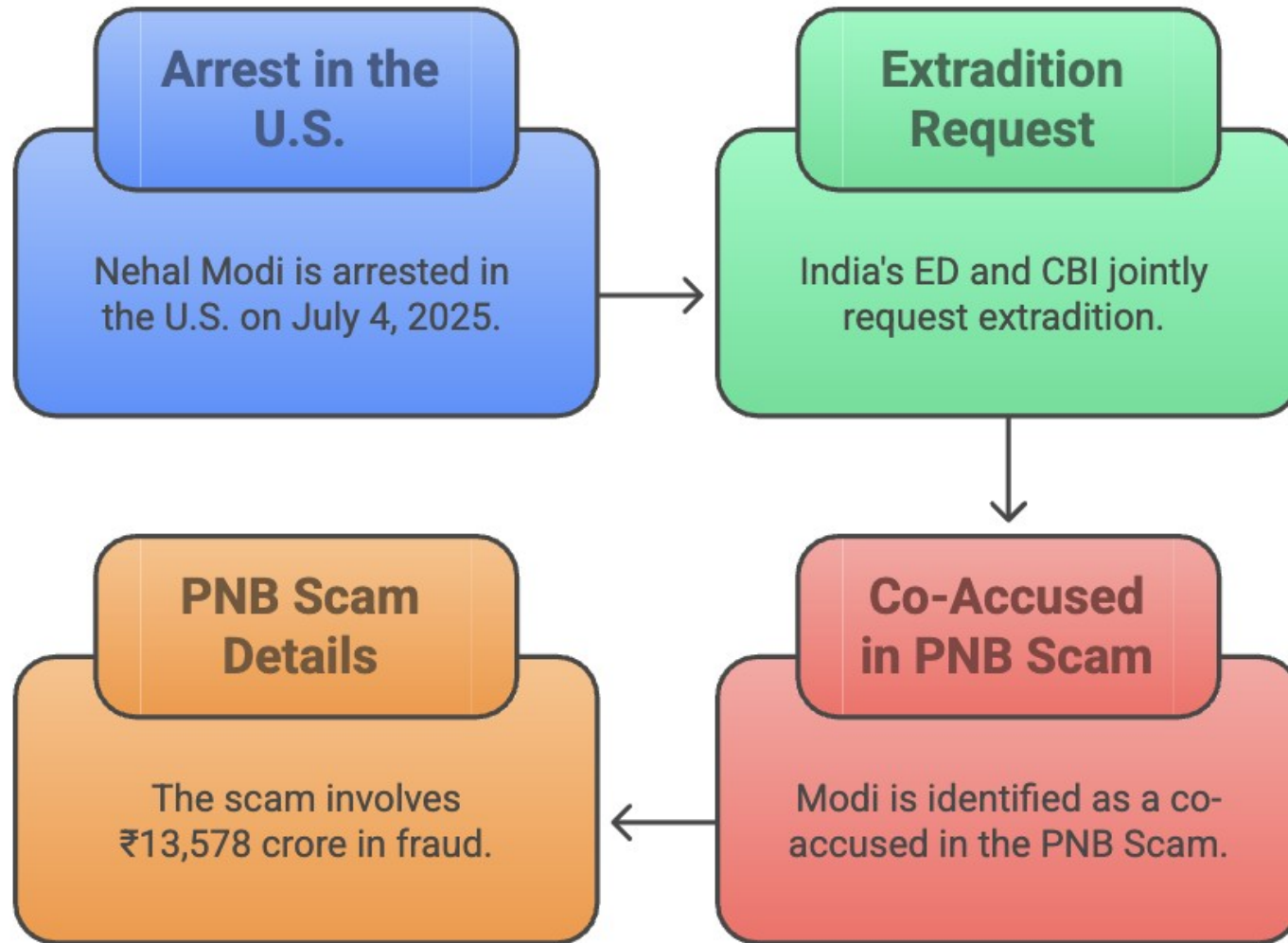
"Nehal Modi was perso-

nally overseeing that all the accounts and records were eliminated. He intimidated the witnesses and sent them to Cairo, where their passports were taken away at his instance to prevent their escape. In one case, he had offered ₹20 lakh to a witness for giving false testimony before the judicial authorities in Europe," the official said.

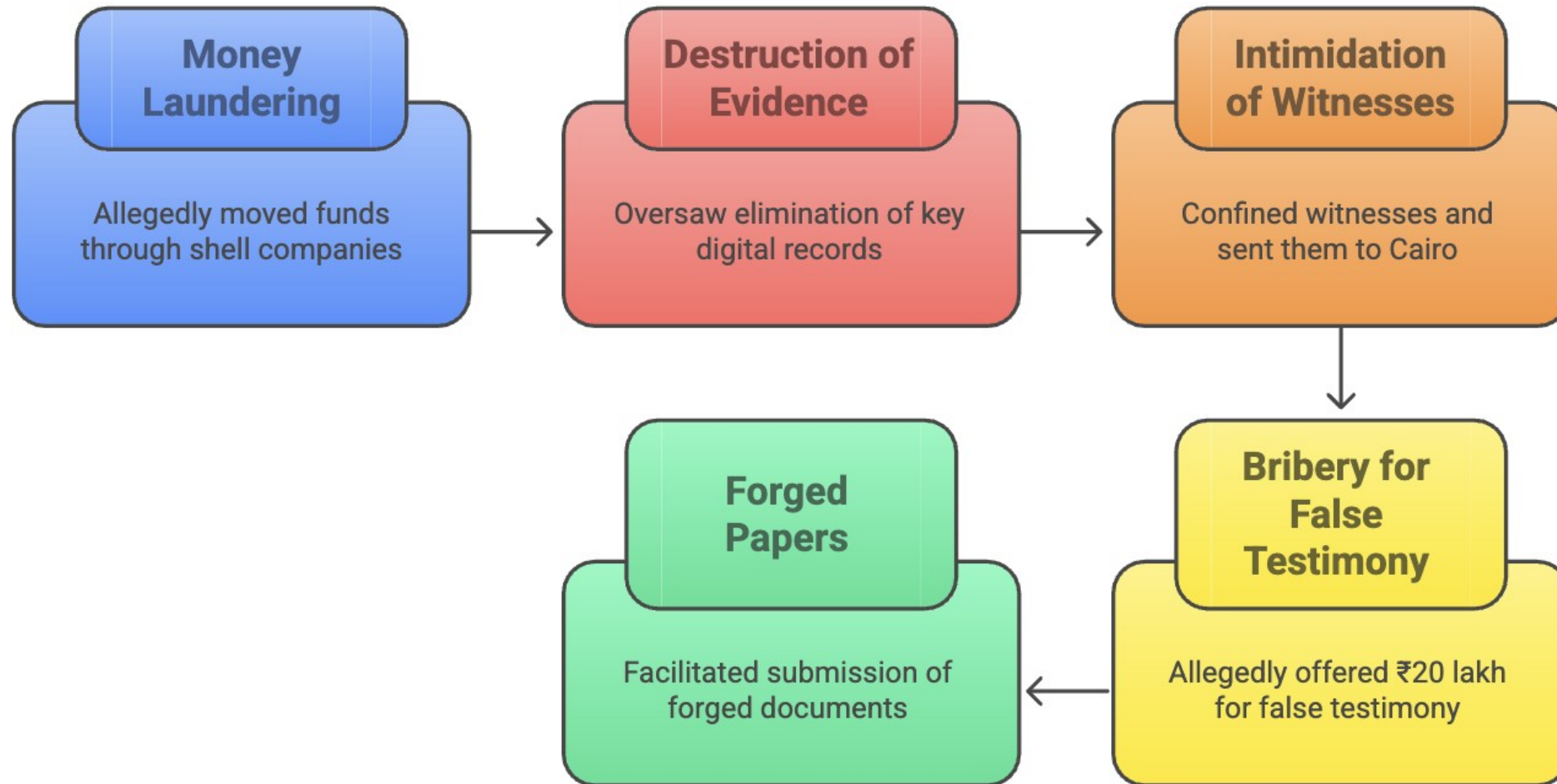
In March 2021, probe agencies submitted before a special court in Mumbai that a joint extradition request had been sent to the U.S.

In another case against his uncle, Mehul Choksi and others, Mr. Nehal Modi has been accused of being in charge of Samuels Jewellers Inc. and Diamlink Inc., which received \$19 million from Mr. Mehul Choksi's Dubai-based shell companies.

Nehal Modi's Arrest and Extradition Request



Alleged Illegal Activities of Nehal Modi



Major Financial Transactions of Nehal Modi

Dummy Entities

Received \$50 million from dummy entities connected to shell firms.

Diamonds

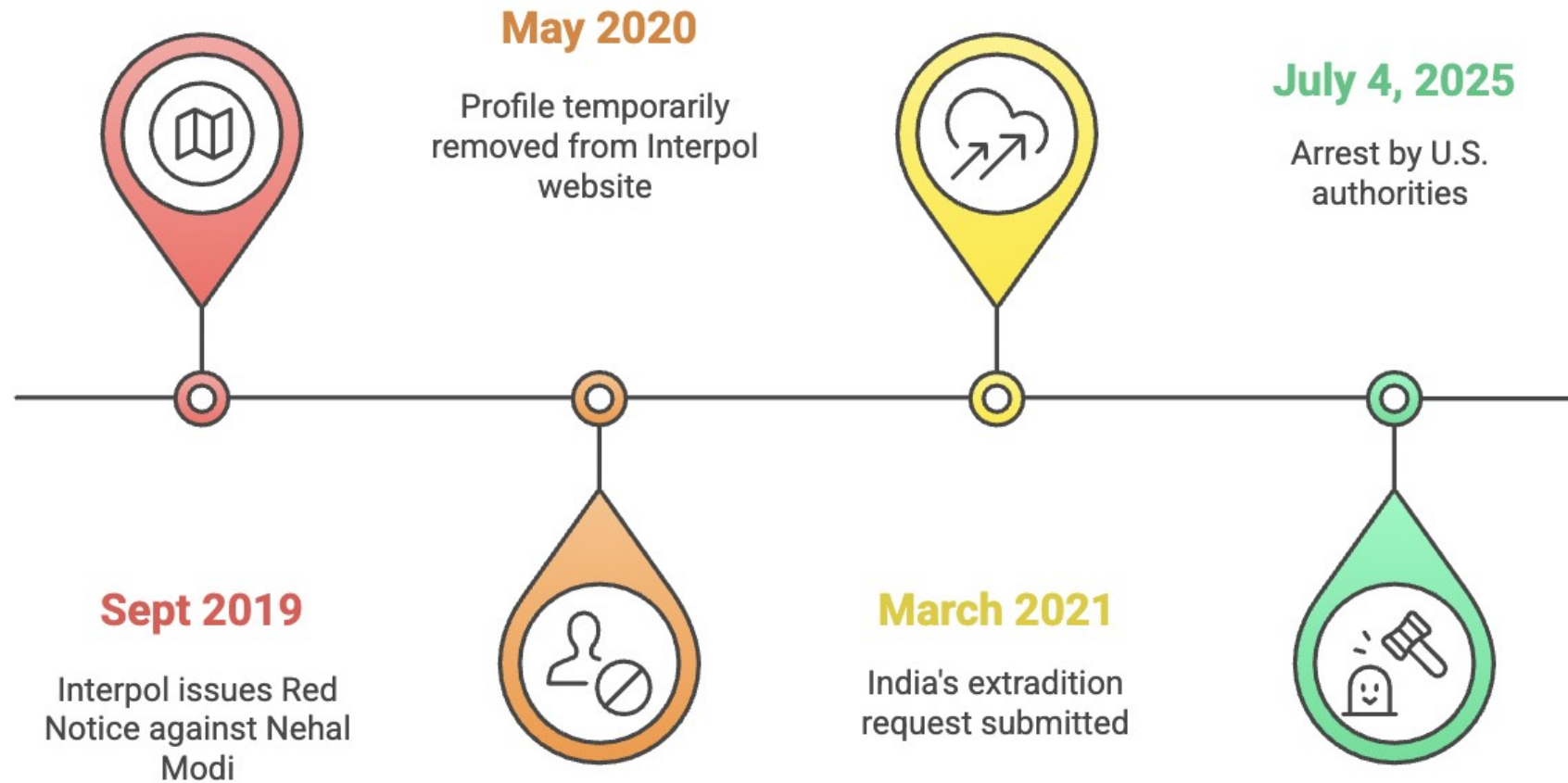
Allegedly took \$6 million worth of diamonds from Hong Kong.

Pearls and Gold

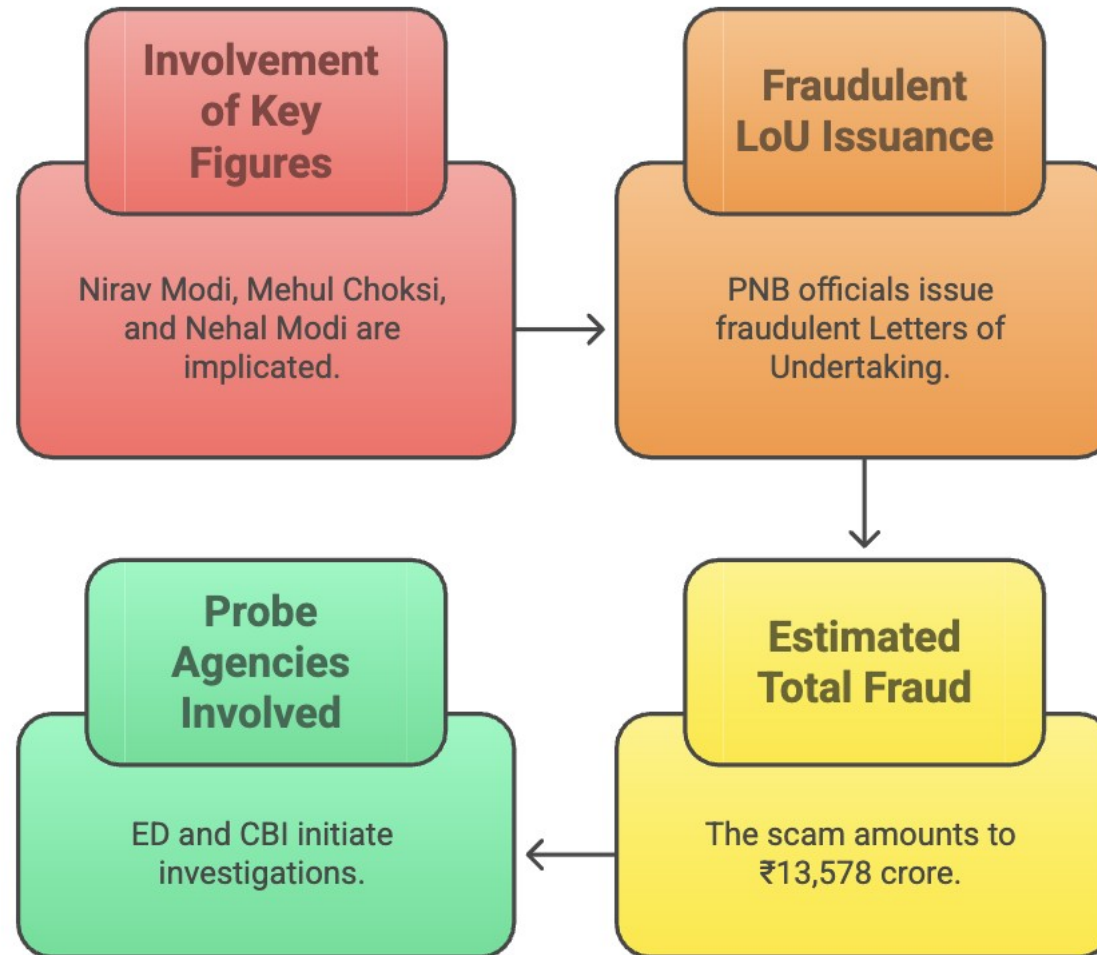
Allegedly took 150 boxes of pearls and 50 kg of gold from Dubai.



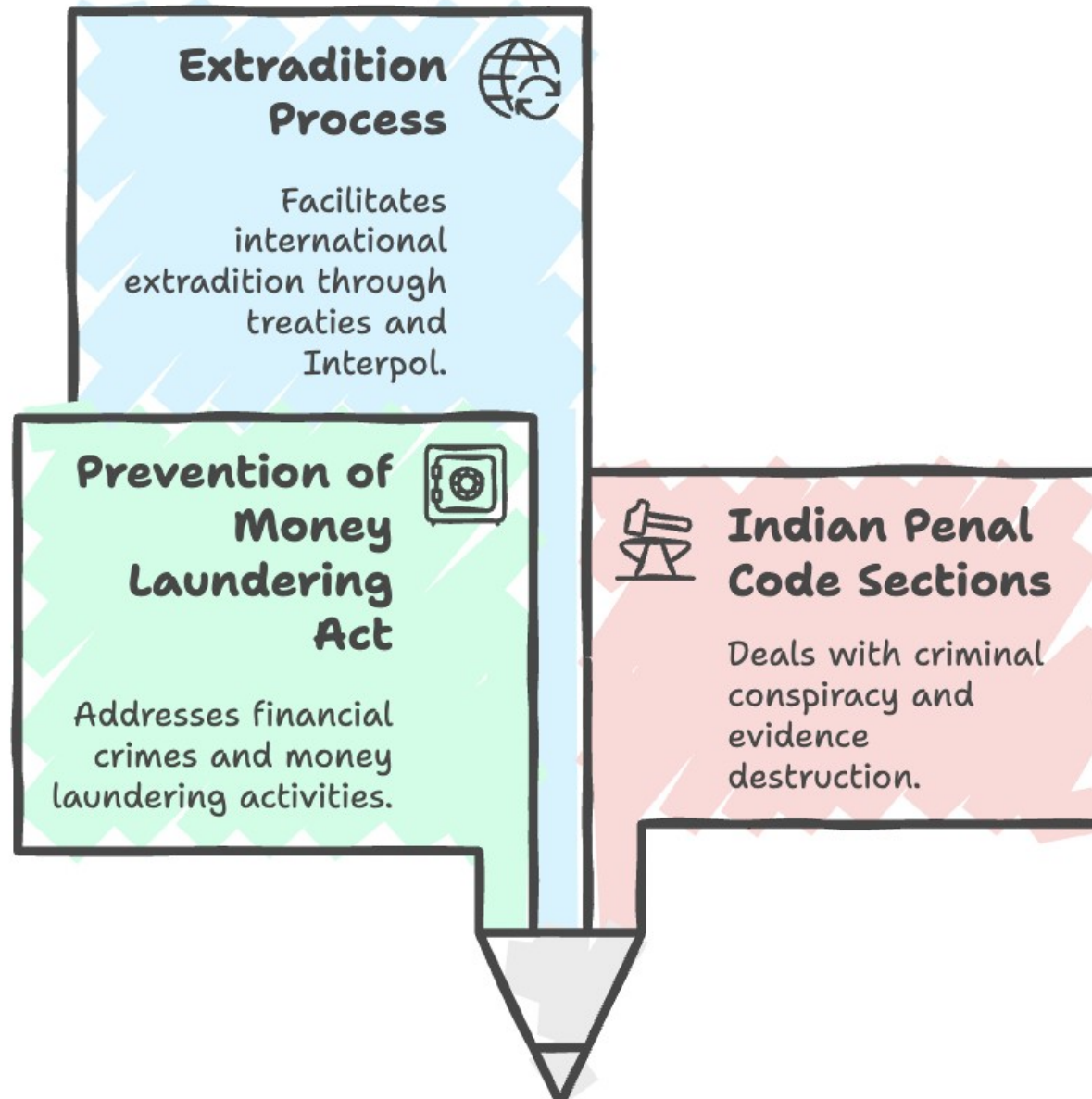
Nehal Modi's Legal Journey: Key Milestones



PNB Scam Sequence



Navigating Legal Pathways



India, Trinidad and Tobago sign multiple deals

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Warm welcome: Prime Minister Narendra Modi being greeted upon his arrival at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago. PTI

signed an agreement on Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in Trinidad and Tobago.

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Government of India will provide grant funding for the implementation of short gestation QIPs which will not exceed \$50,000 for each project. A maxi-

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In Buenos Aires, he laid a wreath at the memorial of General Jose de San Martin, regarded as a national hero in Argentina, and was later received by President Javier Milei at Casa Rosada, the seat of Argentina government.

(With PTI inputs)

1. Key Highlights of the Visit

- At least **six agreements signed** to strengthen financial and pharma sector ties.
 - Trinidad & Tobago to join:
 - **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)**
 - **Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA)**
-

2. Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) Agreement

- Indian Grant Assistance for **Quick Impact Projects** in Trinidad & Tobago.
- Projects eligible for Indian grant funding of **up to \$50,000 per project**.
- **Minimum of five projects** to be offered annually.

3. Technology & Education Cooperation

- India to gift **2,000 laptops** to support digitisation of education in Trinidad & Tobago.
 - Supports the vision of Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar for advancing digital education.
-

4. Agricultural Cooperation

- India gifted **\$1 million** worth of agro-machinery to Trinidad & Tobago.
- Provided to **National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO)**.
- India declared support for:
 - Millet cultivation
 - Seaweed fertilizer promotion
 - Natural farming initiatives

5. Other Diplomatic Engagements

- PM Modi's subsequent two-day visit to **Argentina**.
 - Paid tribute to national hero **General Jose de San Martin**.
 - Held bilateral talks with **President Javier Milei** to enhance cooperation.
-

6. Broader Significance

- Strengthens India's influence in the **Caribbean region**, especially in:
 - Financial sector
 - Pharma sector
 - Disaster resilience
 - Digital infrastructure
 - Agriculture
- Part of India's effort to build partnerships with **Global South** nations.

Consider the following statements regarding recent India-Trinidad & Tobago developments:

1. Trinidad & Tobago has joined both the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and the Global Biofuel Alliance.
2. India has committed to funding Quick Impact Projects in Trinidad & Tobago, with each project eligible for up to \$5,00,000 assistance.
3. India gifted laptops to school students and agro-machinery to Trinidad & Tobago as part of the agreements.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Jaishankar set to visit China to take part in SCO meet

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is set to visit China around July 13 to attend a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), people familiar with the matter said on Friday.

It would be Mr. Jaishankar's first visit to China after the ties between the two countries came under severe strain following the 2020 military standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi may also visit India this month to hold a fresh round of talks with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval under the framework of Special Representatives (SR) dialogue on the boundary dispute, it is learnt. In December, Mr. Doval visited Beijing and held the SR talks with Mr. Wang. Mr. Doval visited China last month as well for a meeting of top security officials of the SCO member nations.

The people cited above said the External Affairs Minister is likely to travel to Beijing for talks with Mr. Wang before going to Tianjin for the conclave of the



S. Jaishankar

SCO Foreign Ministers that will be held on July 14 and 15.

Mr. Jaishankar's visit is taking place less than three weeks after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh travelled to the Chinese port city of Qingdao to participate in a SCO Defence Ministers' conference.

China is the current chair of the SCO, and it is hosting the meetings of the groupings at that capacity.

The military standoff in eastern Ladakh began in May 2020, and a deadly clash at the Galwan Valley in June that year resulted in a severe strain in ties between the two neighbours.

The face-off effectively ended following completion of the disengagement exercise on the border. The meeting of the External Affairs Minister is likely to travel to Beijing for talks with Mr. Wang before going to Tianjin for the conclave of the

Bihar witnessing 'goonda raj' under NDA: Congress

Congress seeks a special Assembly session to discuss law and order situation after the killing of Patna businessman Gopal Khemka; there is hardly any district without daily murders, party says

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The killing of Patna businessman Gopal Khemka is witnessing "goonda raj" under the National Democratic Alliance regime, the Congress leader said on Saturday as it demanded a special session of the State Assembly to discuss the breakdown of law and order.

The special session must also discuss the special revision (SR) of the electoral rolls ahead of the upcoming Bihar Assembly election, the Congress said, alleging that the government is a "de-liberate conspiracy" to help the BJP win power in the State.

"It is humanly impossible to carry out this exercise among eight crore voters of the State," Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Akhilesh Prasad Singh said, addressing a press conference at the India Congress Committee (ICC) headquarters.

Mr. Singh claimed that the people of the State



Veiling concerns: Akhilesh Prasad Singh addressing a press conference at India Bhawan on Saturday. (S.V. KUMAR PUSHPAKAR)

have been left to the mercy of God, while "Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has become a puppet in the hands of the BJP".

Criminal impunity
The Congress MP said that Mr. Khemka, the owner of Magadh Hospital, had been shot dead by criminals near his home in Patna on Friday night, a few years after the murder of his son.

The crime took place near Gandhi Hospital, had been shot dead by criminals near his home in Patna on Friday night, a few years after the murder of his son.

Referring to the killing of three people in Siwan three days ago, Mr. Singh said that there is hardly any district in Bihar where murders are

gun violence and criminality," Mr. Singh said.

Citing official data, the Congress leader claimed that a large number of murders and 41 rape incidents, he claimed. "Last year, data released by the police headquarters stated that in 151 days, there were 1,297 attacks on the police," he added.

Quoting the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), Mr. Singh said that the total number of crimes in Bihar rose from 1,60,664 in 2005 to 3,47,835 in 2022.

"This means the crime rate has been a 323% increase in this number. In terms of murders, Bihar ranks second after Uttar Pradesh," the Congress leader said.

"In Bihar, 2-21,729 women have fallen victim to crimes and there has been a 336% increase in crimes against women. There has been a 1,097% increase in cases of abduction of women, and a horrific 7,062% increase in crimes against children," he added.

U.K.-based arms consultant Bhandari declared a fugitive economic offender

The Hindu
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Saturday declared U.K.-based arms consultant Sanjay Bhandari wanted on charges of tax evasion and money laundering, a fugitive economic offender.

Additional sessions Judge Sanjeev Agnihotri of the Tis Hazari court issued the order for declaring Mr. Bhandari a fugitive under provisions of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act (FEOA) of 2018.

Assets under scanner
The order came on an ap-

plication moved by the ED, which is probing the money laundering charges against him and others.

His name also cropped up during the investigation of a money laundering agency to confiscate the as-

Sanjay Bhandari

sets owned by Mr. Bhandari, the worth of which runs into several crores.

The ED last month had applied the court of the U.K. court denying the extradition of Mr. Bhandari to India, citing the unsafe conditions inside the Tihar Jail in Delhi.

'Tax evasion'
According to the ED, he fled to London in 2016 Bhandari a fugitive Income Tax department raided him in Delhi due to tax evasion.

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India is fourth 'most equal' country, says World Bank report

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Inequality in India has come down significantly between 2011-12 and 2022-23, making it the fourth-most equal country globally, according to a World Bank report.

This is in addition to a sharp decrease in extreme poverty, which has dropped from 16.2% in 2011-12 to 2.3% in 2022-23, an official release said quoting World Bank data.

The government attributed the reduction in inequality to various initiatives and schemes pursued during the last decade.

The only three countries which have a better Gini Index score, a measure of equality, are the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Belarus.

"India's Gini Index stands at 25.5, making it the fourth most equal country in the world, after the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Belarus," the statement said.

Income distribution
The Gini Index helps in understanding how equally income, wealth or consumption is distributed across households or indi-

viduals in a country.

It ranges in value from zero to 100. A score of zero means perfect equality, while a score of 100 means one person has all the income, wealth or consumption.

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Disability pension to soldiers is a right: HC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court quashed around 200 petitions filed by the Ministry of Defence challenging the grant of disability pension to soldiers. A Division Bench rejected the Centre's challenge to the orders passed by the Armed Forces Tribunal.

The court said disability pension is not an act of generosity, but a rightful acknowledgement of the sacrifices endured by the soldiers.

On the draw



T.N. CM to launch 'Ungaludan Stalin' initiative on July 15

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin is set to launch the first camp of the 'Ungaludan Stalin' (Stalin with You) initiative on July 15 at Chidambaram Municipality in Cuddalore district.

Under this initiative, 10,000 special camps will be organised across both rural and urban areas in all districts from July 15 to November. According to an official release, the initiative aims at directly addressing public grievances and bring government services and welfare schemes directly to people's neighbourhoods.

While 3,768 camps will be conducted in urban areas, 6,232 will be held in rural areas.

The camps in urban areas will offer a total of 46 services from 15 departments while 46 services from 15 departments will be provided at camps in rural areas.

In addition, medical services will be provided at each camp to ensure the well-being of the public, the release said.



M.K. Stalin

nearby 14 lakh trained volunteers will visit each household starting July 7, to inform people about the date and location of their nearest camp.

They will also explain the various government services being provided, the eligibility criteria and the documents required to avail of the services.

Women who are eligible but have been left out of the 200-point staff recruitment rules to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), along with the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

In a reform of a sweeping nature, Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, who is only by a second Dalit, top judge of the country, also extended the benefit of reservation in the court's non-judicial staff jobs to the physically challenged, ex-servicemen, and dependents of freedom fighters.

Supreme Court introduces quota for OBCs, SCs and STs in direct staff recruitments

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has notified amendment in its staff recruitment rules to include reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), along with the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).

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The decision of the Chief Justice to amend Rule 4A of the Supreme Court Officers and Servants (Conditions of Service and Conduct) Rules, 1961, was announced under Article 146(2) of the Constitution.

The notification issued in the Official Gazette on Thursday clarified that the reservation in direct staff recruitments to the top by the Chief Justice may, from time to time, specify the rules, orders and notifications issued by the Centre.

Rayya Sabha member



Rayya Sabha member

and senior advocate P. Wilson, who had pushed for OBC reservation in staff recruitments to the apex court, said in a social media post that the amendment would be in alignment with national standards of affirmative action".

He termed the amendment a "historic reform".

However, the reservation for the OBCs in its staff recruitments, conceived 33 years after a nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in the *Indro Saraf* judgment of November 1992 validated 27% reservation for the category's Central government services.

Chief Justice Gavai took the initiative to introduce a roster system to recruit candidates from the SCs and STs as Supreme Court staff. The move comes three decades after the court itself had declared in a Constitution Bench judgment in the *RK Sabharwal* case that the roster system would ensure equal jobs between the general and reserved categories.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The intention of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) was not to use the assets of Associated Journals Limited (AJL) "to save this historic institution, Senior Advocate R.S. Chelmsford submitted in the court on Saturday. Advocate Chelmsford was representing the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mr. Rahul Gandhi, who was accused in the *National Herald* money laundering case being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The case stemmed from the assignment of a TPO to Young Indian for consideration of ₹50 lakh. Mr. Gandhi's counsel rebutted the charges framed by the ED.

Mr. Chelmsford said that AJL did not have profits since its formation, and it was never a commercial institution. Stating that the AICC was trying to retrieve an institution which was part of the freedom movement heritage, he asserted that the problem was not recovering the loan given to AJL but the problem of equitable distribution of the came back on the rails.

The matter was raised by senior BJP leader Subramanian Swamy (who is also a member of the Rajya Sabha) in the Rajya Sabha on July 10, to see that the alleged criminal conspiracy by several Congress leaders, including Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Mr. Rahul

AJL was never a commercial institution, says senior advocate R.S. Chelmsford.

Gandhi, the late Motilal Vohra, the late Oscar Fernandes, Suman Dubey Sam Pitroda, and Young Indian Pvt Ltd.

Mr. Gandhi's counsel rebutted the charges framed by the ED.

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One killed in anti-Maoist operation in Bijapur

The Hindu Bureau
RAIPUR

One Maoist has been killed by security forces in the ongoing anti-Maoist operation in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, the police said on Saturday.

A senior police officer said that the gunfight between the Maoists and a security team had been going on in the National Park area of Bijapur since Friday evening, during which the casualty was inflicted.

Operation under way
Earlier, the officer said, based on intelligence inputs received about the presence of a large cadre of Maoists in the area, a joint search operation was begun by the forces.

During his visit to Chhattisgarh in June, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had said that in a departure from the past, anti-Maoist operations would continue in the Bastar forests in monsoon this year.

Traditionally, the operations are halted during the monsoon because rainfall and floods hamper any action inside the dense forests.

Supreme Court introduces quota for OBCs, SCs and STs in direct staff recruitments

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

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In a reform of a sweeping nature, Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, who is only the second Dalit top judge of the country, also extended the benefit of reservation in the court's non-judicial staff jobs to the physically challenged, ex-servicemen, and dependents of freedom fighters.

The decision of the Chief Justice to amend Rule 4A of the Supreme Court Officers and Servants (Conditions of Service and Conduct) Rules, 1961, was exercised under Article 146(2) of the Constitution.

The notification issued in the Official Gazette on Thursday clarified that the reservation in direct staff recruitments to the top court would follow the rules, orders and notifications issued by the Centre.



“Reservation in direct recruitment to various categories of posts specified in the schedule, for the candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, physically challenged, ex-servicemen and dependent of freedom fighters shall be in accordance with the rules, orders, and notifications issued from time to time by the Government of India in respect of posts carrying the pay scale corresponding to the pay scale prescribed for the post specified in the schedule, subject to such modification, variation or exception as the Chief Justice may, from time to time, specify,” the notification read.

Rajya Sabha member

and senior advocate P. Wilson, who had pushed for OBC reservation in staff recruitments to the apex court, said in a social media post that the amendment of Rule 4A “ensured alignment with national standards of affirmative action”. He termed the amendment a “historic reform”.

However, the reservation for the OBCs in its staff recruitments comes over 33 years after a nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in the *Indira Sawhney* judgment of November 1992 validated 27% reservation for the category in Central government services.

Chief Justice Gavai took the initiative to introduce a roster system to recruit candidates from the SCs and STs as Supreme Court staff. The move comes three decades after the court itself had declared in a Constitution Bench judgment in the *RK Sabharwal* case that a 200-point roster system would ensure equitable distribution of jobs between the general and reserved categories.

- The **Supreme Court of India** has amended its recruitment rules to introduce reservation for:
 - Other Backward Classes (OBCs)
 - Scheduled Castes (SCs)
 - Scheduled Tribes (STs)
 - Physically challenged persons
 - Ex-servicemen
 - Dependents of freedom fighters
-

2. Legal Framework

- Amendment made to **Rule 4A of the Supreme Court Officers and Servants (Conditions of Service and Conduct) Rules, 1961**.
 - Power exercised under **Article 146(2)** of the Constitution.
 - Reservation in direct recruitment will follow:
 - Rules, orders, and notifications issued by the **Government of India**.
-

3. Historical and Legal Context

- Comes **33 years after** the 1992 **Indira Sawhney judgment**, which upheld 27% reservation for OBCs in Central government jobs.
- **Chief Justice B.R. Gavai**, the second Dalit CJI, led the reform.
- Initiative taken to introduce a **roster system** for equitable distribution of jobs, in line with the 1992 **R.K. Sabharwal** case judgment mandating a 200-point roster system.

4. Significance of the Move

- Aligns Supreme Court staff recruitment with **national standards of affirmative action**.
 - Seen as a **historic reform** to ensure representation and social justice.
 - Expected to enhance diversity and inclusion in the top court's administrative structure.
-

5. Additional Context

- Rule specifies that reservations will apply to posts with pay scales corresponding to those specified in the schedule.
 - Allows for modification or exceptions by the Chief Justice.
-

Consider the following statements regarding recent changes in Supreme Court staff recruitment:

1. The Supreme Court has introduced reservations for SCs, STs, and OBCs in direct recruitment for its non-judicial staff.
2. The amendments were made using powers under Article 146(2) of the Constitution.
3. The reservation system in the Supreme Court will be implemented irrespective of any rules or notifications issued by the Central Government.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

IN BRIEF



Four dead after portion of coal mine collapses in Jharkhand

Four people were killed and four injured after a portion of an abandoned coal mine collapsed during "illegal" mining in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district in the early hours of Saturday, an official said. The incident happened at the Karma project in Mahua Tangri in Kujua Outpost area. The relief and rescue operation has been called off after the debris was removed, a police officer said. "There is no possibility of any person being trapped inside as the debris has been removed," Ramgarh's SDPO Parmeshwar Prasad said. SP Ajay Kumar said the abandoned mine belonged to Central Coalfields Ltd.

Man joins hearing from toilet, slapped with contempt action

The Gujarat High Court has taken suo motu contempt action against a man who attended a virtual court hearing while sitting on a toilet seat, an incident that sparked outrage after a video of it went viral on social media. The incident occurred on June 20 during a hearing before Justice Nizar S. Desai. A Division Bench of Justice A.S. Upadhyay and R.T. Vachhani, in an order dated June 30, directed the High Court registry to register contempt proceedings against the individual in the video. The Bench instructed the Registrar of Information and Technology to devise a mechanism to prevent such misconduct during livestreamed proceedings.

Mob beats man to death over minor accident in Rajasthan

Communal tension gripped Jahazpur town in Rajasthan's Bhilwara district on Saturday after a 25-year-old man, Sitaram Koon, was allegedly beaten to death following a minor road accident. The victim's car hit a roadside vegetable cart in the market, after which a crowd gathered at the spot and thrashed him. The police have arrested the main accused for alleged communal enmity and detained another suspect after registering a murder case against 16 named and 20 unidentified persons. Meanwhile, the local administration has withdrawn its permission to take out Muharram processions in the town on Sunday, citing law and order concerns.

Advocate withdraws consent for appointment as HC judge

An advocate has withdrawn her consent for appointment as a judge of the Delhi High Court after the Union government kept the Supreme Court Collegium's recommendation of her name pending for nearly a year. Advocate Shwetare Majumdar's name was recommended by the Collegium on August 21 last year, along with the names of two other lawyers, to the Centre for their appointment as Delhi High Court judges. The two others were Ajay Duggal and Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar. While the Centre cleared their appointments on January 6, 2025, Ms. Majumdar's name was left pending without any reasons being assigned.

SUDOKU

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

Amit Shah lays foundation for India's first co-op university

Launching a CBSE course on co-ops, Minister urges Gujarat government to include it as a subject from Classes 9 to 12 in State Board schools as well; university will train professionals for co-ops

Abhinav Deshpande
MUMBAI



Amit Shah lights a ceremonial lamp during the foundation stone laying ceremony of Tribhuvan Sahkari University. ANI

Union Minister of Cooperation and Home Affairs Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for India's first national cooperative university on Saturday, even while advocating for the inclusion of cooperative education at an earlier stage, in the secondary school curricula.

Addressing a gathering of farmers, cooperatives, and officials at the ceremony in Gujarat's Anand — home of Amul, one of India's biggest and best known cooperatives — Mr. Shah emphasised the Tribhuvan Sahkari University's proposed role in fulfilling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to strengthen the cooperative sector.

"As envisioned by PM Modi, Tribhuvan Sahkari University will meet the

need for trained professionals in cooperatives, bring transparency, foster innovation, and provide technical education in areas such as accounting, marketing, and cooperative values — ensuring expertise alongside a spirit of service to the poor," he said.

High school subject
Launching a special course

on cooperatives by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the Minister called for similar courses to be started by the State government as well. "CBSE has started adding cooperative education in its syllabus. (Gujarat) Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel Speaker, and the Education Minister, all three are present here. I request that

just like CBSE, even the Gujarat government should add cooperative as a subject in the curriculum in books for Classes 9 to 12. The Gujarat government should also add cooperatives as a subject in its curriculum so that common people know the importance of cooperatives," Mr. Shah said. The university has been named after Tribhuvan Sahkari Patel, a pioneer of the cooperative movement in India and a key figure behind the foundation of Amul. Mr. Shah recalled how the cooperative movement that began in 1946 under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's guidance has now grown into an ₹80,000 crore enterprise involving 36 lakh women.

The university will offer specialised courses in cooperative management, finance, law, and rural development.

Ex-UGC chief, godman, govt. officials among accused in medical scam

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI/BHOPAL

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked several educationists, officials of the Union Health Ministry and the National Health Authority, members of the National Medical Commission (NMC) inspection teams and a godman head of an organisation for alleged conspiracy to sabotage the inspection process for various private medical colleges in several States.

Among those booked in the case are D.P. Singh, former Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and current Chancellor of Tata Institute of Social Studies (Mumbai); Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Institute of Medical Sciences



According to CBI, Health Ministry officials and members of the NMC inspection teams engaged in corrupt practices. And Research (SRISMSR), Raipur in Chhattisgarh, and its head Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj; Mayur Raval, registrar of Geetanjali University, Udaipur; Rasth; and Suresh Singh Bhadori, chairman of Indore Medical College, Indore; Madhya Pradesh. Jitu Lal Meena, then

whole-time member of the Medical Assessment and Rating Board and Joint Director of the National Health Authority; Poonam Meena, Dharamvir, Piyush Malayan, Anup Kumar, Rajat Sharma, Chandan Kumar, Deepak, and Manisha have been named.

NMC team members Chandra M.S., Rajiv K. Reddy, Manjappa C.N., and Ashok Shetty; Venkat, director of Gayatri Medical College, Visakhapatnam; and its head Ravi Shankar Ji Maharaj; Mayur Raval, registrar of Geetanjali University, Udaipur; Rasth; and Suresh Singh Bhadori, chairman of Indore Medical College, Indore; Madhya Pradesh. Jitu Lal Meena, then

rayan Institute of Medical Sciences & Research, Gandhinagar, Gujarat are among the other accused.

Sabotaged inspections
According to the CBI, certain officials of the Health Ministry and members of the NMC inspection teams, in conspiracy with middlemen and representatives of various private medical colleges, entered into corrupt practices to extend favours to the institutions.

The Minister accused officials supplied prior information to the representatives of medical colleges to help them subvert the assessment process by temporarily meeting the requirements and by having the inspection team members for favourable reports.

Prove FRA damaged forests, says Tribal Affairs Ministry

Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI



A tribal villager in Odisha entering a forest to collect produce. ILLUSTRATION

A little over six months after the release of the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023, which attributed "negative" changes in forest and tree cover to the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) and other factors, the Tribal Affairs Ministry has asked the Environment Ministry to provide evidence for this claim.

The Tribal Affairs Ministry, which is the nodal ministry for the implementation of the FRA, said that making such claims without "adequate scientific evidence" may reinforce stereotypes among State, district, and forest administrations "that could undermine the rights vested in the Act, as well as the effectiveness of the implementation".

The Ministry has requested a "detailed scientific analysis" for the claim "with valid instances through ground truthing as reported in the ISFR 2023". A senior government official told The Hindu, "The ISFR has two sections — one on 'positive' changes and another on 'negative' changes. If such claims are made, the purpose is to find out what evidence supports it. That is why this communication has been issued."

Letter to Centre
The Tribal Affairs Ministry's communication, dated July 2, comes days after over 150 forest rights and civil society groups wrote to the Union government, taking issue with the ISFR's inclusion of "negative" change in forest cover partly to the implementation of the Forest Rights Act. They had pointed out that this claim had been repeated by Environment Minister Bhupendra Patel Yadav in a media interview last month.

Former Environment Minister and Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, who had amplified the civil society groups' letter, shared the Tribal Affairs Ministry's communication on social media on Saturday.

The Tribal Affairs Ministry, in its communication, said that the FRA "does not deal with regularisation of encroachments". Instead, "acknowledges pre-existing rights that are already being exercised by eligible individuals and communities dwelling in forest areas, beyond securing the tenure of the existing forest dwellers, FRA does not create any new rights that could potentially affect the ecological balance within protected areas," it said.

The communication has noted that the ISFR 2023, in the chapter on "Change in forest and tree cover", has two sections — one on "positive" changes and another on "negative" changes.

In the report, under the possible reasons for "negative" changes, the Environment Ministry lists "titles given to beneficiaries under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) as one of them. According to a review of the last five ISFRs published by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) in the past decade, this is the first time, under FRA have been included in the list explicitly. The point on FRA as one of the reasons for "negative" change to forest cover was reiterated by Mr. Yadav in an email interview with a daily newspaper.

Notably, the Environment Ministry had denied allegations made again by the civil society groups in a statement posted on social media on Thursday. The statement had said, after Mr. Ramesh had posted the civil society groups' letter on social media.

'BRICS has no plan for an alternative currency'

Brazil's Ambassador to India says the summit in Rio will focus on building intra-BRICS trade, climate change, artificial intelligence and fighting terrorism; he says that the grouping may look at adopting local currencies as an option for conducting trade and it will be on a voluntary basis

INTERVIEW
Kenneth Felix Haczynski da Nobrega

Subhasini Haldar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will land in Rio De Janeiro early Sunday morning to attend the BRICS summit (July 6-7), along with leaders of the newly inducted members Egypt, Ethiopia, the UAE, Iran, and Indonesia. All eyes will be on a Leaders' Joint Statement, especially on India's focus on terrorism after the Pahalgam attack and Operation Sindoor, as well as differences with the U.S. if BRICS moves towards de-dollarisation, Brazil's Ambassador to India Kenneth Felix Haczynski da Nobrega says the

grouping has no plans of creating an alternative currency, but will build options of local currency trade within itself. Excerpts:

What are your hopes for real outcomes from this summit?

We are envisaging a BRICS which will deliver some results, among them, a dedicated climate change financing, financing and regulation of artificial intelligence, and a partnership on socially determined diseases, diseases which we associate with states of poverty. Apart from the first two sessions of the Rio BRICS summit will be open to the partner countries and to invited countries. This is something that does not exist, and we are not envisioning creating a BRICS currency in the foreseeable future. What we are envisaging is stimulating businesses of BRICS countries to adopt local currencies as an option for conducting trade. This will be on a voluntary basis, and it's nothing new within the MERCOSUR, which is the South American integration process,



towards de-dollarisation. How seriously do you take the U.S. statements against BRICS?

If you have declarations of an important country like the United States, it is taken seriously. But to speak of a BRICS currency... that is something that does not exist, and we are not envisioning creating a BRICS currency in the foreseeable future.

U.S. President Donald Trump has threatened 100-500% tariffs against BRICS if it moves

we have had the possibility of using local-currency trades for more than 25 years. So this is just one more option, not a move against the dollar.

This is the first BRICS summit since the Pahalgam terror attack. How will BRICS address the issue of terrorism?
I can tell you that the Foreign Minister's meeting of BRICS (on April 28-29), which did not produce a joint statement but had a Chair's summary, included a paragraph on the Pahalgam attack. So we are quite confident that the Leaders' Statement at BRICS would also contain a robust paragraph condemning terrorism.

Has the expansion of BRICS led to more tensions within the grouping? There is still no clarity on the membership of Saudi Arabia. Is BRICS losing its cohesiveness?

In the past, even when BRICS was composed of only five members, it always focused on what unites such diverse countries, not on divisions. The five original members — Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa — were already diverse countries, and the focus was not on what we cannot do together, but what we can do together. Accepting new members, BRICS has shown its diversity and consensus-building ability. And it is this ability that led to notable efforts like the establishment of the New Development Bank.

Given the focus on the Global South in BRICS, do you see the Rio Summit pitching itself as a challenger to the more established G-7 grouping?
Brazil has never seen

BRICS as a challenge to G-7, or as some kind of bloc against G-7. BRICS is a group that comes together to advance our converging interests.

What are the main outcomes expected from Prime Minister Modi's visit to Brasilia, and a meeting with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, which will follow the BRICS summit?

The state visit will take place against a backdrop of booming business and engagement between our two countries. Just to give you a figure, in less than two years, we have had 110 missions (trade and bilateral) in both directions between India and Brazil. These missions were basically focused on four areas: defence, agriculture, energy and the pharmaceutical industry. We have seen an intensification of contacts between government and government on digital partnerships and artificial intelligence. We now have space here to take stock and facilitate business in a number of areas.

Amit Shah lays foundation for India's first co-op university

Launching a CBSE course on co-ops, Minister urges Gujarat government to include it as a subject from Classes 9 to 12 in State Board schools as well; university will train professionals for co-ops

Abhinay Deshpande
MUMBAI

Union Minister of Cooperation and Home Affairs Amit Shah laid the foundation stone for India's first national cooperative university on Saturday, even while advocating for the inclusion of cooperative education at an earlier stage, in the secondary school curricula.

Addressing a gathering of farmers, cooperators, and officials at the ceremony in Gujarat's Anand – home of Amul, one of India's biggest and best known cooperatives – Mr. Shah emphasised the Tribhuvan Sahkari University's proposed role in fulfilling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to strengthen the cooperative sector.

"As envisioned by PM Modi, Tribhuvan Sahkari University will meet the



Amit Shah lights a ceremonial lamp during the foundation stone laying ceremony of Tribhuvan Sahkari University. ANI

need for trained professionals in cooperatives, bring transparency, foster innovation, and provide technical education in areas such as accounting, marketing, and cooperative values – ensuring expertise alongside a spirit of service to the poor," he said.

High school subject
Launching a special course

on cooperatives by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the Minister called for similar courses to be started by the State government as well.

"CBSE has started adding cooperatives to the syllabus. [Gujarat] Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, the Vidhan Sabha Speaker, and the Education Minister, all three are present here. I request that

just like CBSE, even the Gujarat government should add cooperatives as a subject in the curriculum in books for Classes 9 to 12. The Gujarat government should also add cooperatives as a subject in its curriculum so that common people know the importance of cooperatives," Mr. Shah said. The university has been named after Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel, a pioneer of the cooperative movement in India and a key figure behind the foundation of Amul. Mr. Shah recalled how the cooperative movement that began in 1946 under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's guidance has now grown into an ₹80,000 crore enterprise involving 36 lakh women.

The university will offer specialised courses in cooperative management, finance, law, and rural development.

1. Background and Announcement

- Union Minister of Cooperation and Home Affairs **Amit Shah** laid the foundation stone for **India's first national cooperative university**.
 - Location: **Anand**, Gujarat (known as the Milk Capital of India and headquarters of Amul).
 - Name: **Tribhuvan Sahkari University** (named after Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel, pioneer of the cooperative movement and founder of Amul).
 - Fulfils PM Narendra Modi's vision to strengthen the cooperative sector through technical education and professional training.
-

2. Significance of the University

- Will provide specialized education in:
 - Cooperative management
 - Finance
 - Law
 - Rural development
- Focus on:
 - Creating trained professionals for cooperatives
 - Promoting transparency
 - Fostering innovation
 - Technical education in accounting, marketing, cooperative values

3. Cooperative Education in Schools

- Amit Shah urged:
 - Gujarat Government to include cooperatives as a subject in school curricula for **Classes 9 to 12** (State Board schools).
 - Similar initiatives at the **CBSE** level already started, integrating cooperatives into the syllabus.
-

4. Historical and Economic Context

- India's cooperative movement:
 - Started in **1946** under **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's** guidance.
 - Grew into a ₹80,000 crore enterprise.
 - Involves over **36 lakh members**.
- Amul, founded under cooperative principles, is one of India's biggest and most successful cooperative organizations.

Consider the following statements regarding India's first Cooperative University:

1. It has been established in Maharashtra, the state known for its cooperative sugar factories.
2. The university is named after Tribhuvandas Patel, a key figure in India's cooperative movement.
3. The university will offer specialized education in cooperative management, finance, law, and rural development.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

India becomes fourth 'most equal' country globally: World Bank

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, July 5

INEQUALITY IN India has come down significantly between 2011-12 and 2022-23, making it the fourth-most equal country globally, according to a World Bank report.

This is in addition to a sharp decrease in extreme poverty, which has dropped from 16.2% in 2011-12 to 2.3% in 2022-23, an official release said quoting World Bank data.

The government attributed the reduction in inequality to various initiatives and schemes pursued during the last decade. The only three countries which have a better Gini Index score, a measure of equality, are the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Belarus.

India is much better placed than countries like China, the USA and the United Kingdom.

"...India's Gini Index stands at 25.5, making it the fourth most equal country in the world, after the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Belarus," the statement said.

The Gini Index helps in understanding how equally income, wealth or consumption is distributed across households or individuals in a country. It ranges in value from 0 to 100. A score of 0 means perfect equality, while a score of 100 means one person has all the income, wealth or consumption and others have none, hence absolute inequality. The higher the Gini Index, the more unequal a country is. India's score is much lower than China's 35.7 and far lower than the United States, which stands at 41.8.

As per the World Bank's report, which has released the data for 167 countries, India falls into the "moderately low"

GETTING EQUAL

■ Extreme poverty decreases from **16.2%** in 2011-12 to **2.3%** in 2022-23

■ Countries with better Gini Index score — Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Belarus

■ **171 million** Indians moved out of extreme poverty between 2011 and 2023

■ Schemes promoting equality — PM Jan Dhan Yojana, Direct Benefit Transfer, Stand-Up India, among others



■ Gini Index was measured at **28.8** in 2011 and reached **25.5** in 2022

inequality category, which includes Gini scores between 25 and 30. India is only a fraction away from joining the "low inequality" group.

The government attributed this achievement to a sharp reduction in the poverty level in the last decade.

According to the World Bank report, 171 million Indians have been lifted out of extreme poverty over the past decade. The share of people living on less than USD 2.15 a day, which was the global threshold for extreme poverty till June 2025, fell sharply from 16.2 per cent in 2011-12 to just 2.3 per cent in 2022-23. Globally, just 30 countries fall into the "moderately low" inequality category, including several European countries with strong welfare systems. These include Iceland, Norway, Finland, and Belgium. It also features growing economies like Poland and wealthy nations like the United Arab Emirates. The release said India's journey towards a more equal society is reflected in its Gini Index over the years. The index was measured at 28.8 in

2011 and reached 25.5 in 2022. "This steady shift shows that India has made consistent progress in combining economic growth with social equity," it said.

It further said India's progress towards greater income equality is backed by a series of focused government initiatives. These schemes aim to improve financial access, deliver welfare benefits efficiently, and support vulnerable and underrepresented groups. "Together, they have helped bridge gaps, boost livelihoods, and ensure that growth reaches all sections of society," the release said.

It has cited schemes, like PM Jan Dhan Yojana, Direct Benefit Transfer, and Stand-Up India, among others, which have helped India in its progress towards greater income equality. "India's path to income equality has been steady and focused. The Gini Index of 25.5 is not just a number. It reflects real change in people's lives. More families now have access to food, banking, healthcare, and jobs," the release said.

- India is now ranked **4th globally in income equality** according to the **World Bank**.
 - Only three countries have better **Gini Index scores** than India:
 - **Slovak Republic**
 - **Slovenia**
 - **Belarus**
-

2. Understanding the Gini Index

- Measures income or wealth inequality within a country.
- **Scale:** 0 = Perfect equality; 100 = Maximum inequality.
- **India's Gini Index:**
 - 2011: 28.8
 - 2022: 25.5 (placed in "moderately low" inequality category).
- By comparison:
 - **China:** 35.7
 - **United States:** 41.8



3. Reduction in Extreme Poverty

- Share of people living below **USD 2.15/day** fell from:
 - **16.2% in 2011-12 → 2.3% in 2022-23.**
 - Total of **171 million Indians** lifted out of extreme poverty during this period.
-

4. Factors Contributing to Increased Equality

- Government attributed success to focused social and economic schemes:
 - **PM Jan Dhan Yojana**
 - **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)**
 - **Stand-Up India**
- These schemes:
 - Improved financial inclusion.
 - Delivered welfare efficiently.
 - Supported vulnerable and underrepresented groups.

5. Global Context

- 30 countries fall under "moderately low" inequality, including:
 - European nations: Iceland, Norway, Finland, Belgium.
 - Growing economies: Poland, UAE.
 - India's consistent policy focus credited for steady decline in inequality.
-

6. Economic and Social Implications

- The progress demonstrates:
 - Successful combination of **economic growth and social equity**.
 - Enhanced access to **food, banking, healthcare, and jobs**.
 - Decline in poverty and bridging of socio-economic gaps.

Consider the following statements regarding India's Gini Index and income equality:

1. India ranks fourth globally in income equality according to the latest World Bank report.
2. India's Gini Index improved from 28.8 in 2011 to 25.5 in 2022.
3. China's Gini Index is currently lower than India's.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

The declaration also recorded support from Russia and China, two permanent members of the UN Security Council, "to the aspirations of Brazil and India to play a greater role in the United Nations, including its Security Council".

The summit welcomed the "new BRICS partner countries" — Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Nigeria, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda, Uzbekistan, and called for promotion of "dialogue and consultations" among developing countries.

EDITORIAL

No change in orders for voter list revision: EC

The commission issues clarification after advertisement published in newspapers by Bihar CEO prompted statements from Opposition that it had 'backtracked' from its stand; special intensive revision of the electoral rolls progressing as per EC's order, says official; Opposition wants Aadhaar, ration, and MGNREGA cards to be made admissible also

Amit Bhelari
Sobhana K. Nair
PATNA/NEW DELHI

Defending the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls under way in Bihar, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar on Sunday said that the Election Commission (EC) had held extensive consultations with all political parties and "no one was satisfied with the current status of electoral rolls for one reason or other".

The EC too clarified that the SIR was being conducted as per its June 24 order announcing the exercise and there was "no change in the instructions".

The clarification was issued following front-page advertisements in newspapers in Patna by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), saying people can submit their filled enumeration forms now and provide the documents later.

'EC backtracks'

Issued in Hindi, the advertisement said, "If you do not have the requisite documents, then provide the enumeration forms to the booth-level officers."

This prompted state-



Racing against time: Voters in Vaishali fill enumeration forms for revision of electoral rolls. X/@ECISVEEP

ments from Opposition leaders, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, that the EC had backtracked under pressure from them.

However, CEO Vinod Singh Gunjyal clarified, "SIR in Bihar is progressing as per EC's order dated 24 June 2025... All measures are being taken to facilitate the existing electors to complete the documentation. These existing voters will have time to submit

the documents even after first submitting their Enumeration Forms. All activities are exactly as per EC's order dated 24.06.2025."

The EC in its statement further cautioned voters against statements being made by a few persons "who without reading the SIR order dated 24 June" were orchestrating and attempting to confuse the public with their "incorrect and misleading" statements. The panel said

while the voters were required to "submit their documents anytime before July 25", those who failed to do so would get an opportunity "during the claims and objections period also".

Opposition ups the ante

Mr. Kumar too issued a short statement without naming any political party. "During the past four months, all 4,123 EROs [Electoral Registration Of-

Moitra, Jha move SC against Bihar poll rolls revision

NEW DELHI

Rashtriya Janata Dal MP Manoj Jha and Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra have separately challenged the voter list revision in Bihar in the Supreme Court. While Mr. Jha said the decision for the revision was taken by the Election Commission without consultation with political parties, Ms. Moitra said the move would disenfranchise crores of voters in the State. Ms. Moitra sought a direction to restrain the EC from issuing similar orders in other States of the country. » PAGE 5

"This is part of the BJP's tactic to mislead and confuse the public. The truth is that the BJP has decided it will crush democracy at all costs. But when faced with public opposition, it cleverly takes a step back," Mr. Kharge said, who had posted on X: "When people rise, BJP backtracks". He further claimed that "the master plan that the BJP had devised to deprive crores of people in Bihar of their voting rights seems to be ensnaring the BJP itself".

He also credited "pressure from the Opposition, the public and civil society" for the EC issuing the advertisement, which he said stated that "only the form needs to be filled and documents were not necessary".

Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya pointed out that "only 14% filled forms have been returned after 10 days, and the EC knows that a huge number of voters will be eliminated at the draft stage itself".

Senior Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader and Rajya Sabha MP Manoj K. Jha told *The Hindu* that the EC had only tried to make its own

work easier by asking voters to fill the enumeration form even if they don't have the documents. "This is an admission that the documents they are asking for are not easily available with the majority of the population. They are on the back foot. And this does not address the real problem," Mr. Jha said.

'Include more cards'

On Friday, a delegation of Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) leaders headed by RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav met Mr. Gunjyal to raise their objections to the SIR. They demanded that Aadhaar card, ration card and MGNREGA card should be added to the list of admissible documents under SIR.

As per data, till 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, a total of 1,12,01,674 enumeration forms had been collected in Bihar, which is 14.18% of the total number of potential voters.

In addition, the total number of counting forms uploaded was 23,90,329, of which 23,14,602 forms were uploaded through BLOs, while 75,789 forms were uploaded by general voters through online mode.

1. Constitutional Provision:

- **Article 324:** Empowers the Election Commission (EC) to:
 - Superintend, direct, and control preparation of electoral rolls for Parliament and State Legislatures.
 - **Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1950 & 1951:**
 - RPA 1950: Only *ordinarily resident* citizens aged 18+ eligible for voter registration.
 - RPA 1951: Disqualifies non-residents or temporary absentees unless they return to their place of residence.
-

2. What is an Electoral Roll?

- Official list of eligible voters in a constituency.
- Prepared by the EC based on legal provisions.
- Ensures only eligible, ordinarily resident citizens can vote.

3. Reason for Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar:

- Bihar last had a regular revision in **2020-21**.
- Due to:
 - Large population of migrant workers.
 - High voter mobility.
 - High rate of voter deletions/additions.
- EC aims to:
 - Update and correct rolls.
 - Remove deceased/ineligible voters.
 - Ensure genuine eligible voters are included.

4. The Current SIR Process:

- Enumeration teams visit households.
- Collect updated information via forms:
 - Existing voters: Confirm residence.
 - New voters: Submit proof of age, residence.
- Timeline: 31 days (technologically supported).
- Migrants and students:
 - If absent, forms to be submitted by family or representatives.

Consider the following statements regarding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar:

1. The SIR is conducted solely by the State Government without the involvement of the Election Commission.
2. Only citizens who are ordinarily resident in the constituency can be included in the electoral rolls.
3. The Aadhaar card is mandatory as the sole proof of residence for voter inclusion in Bihar.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

BEIRUT

Hezbollah refuses to disarm until Israel leaves southern Lebanon



Hezbollah leader Naim Kassem reiterated the militant group's refusal to lay down its weapons before Israel withdraws from all of southern Lebanon and stops its airstrikes. His comments come ahead of an expected visit by U.S. envoy Tom Barrack to Beirut to discuss a proposed plan for Hezbollah's disarmament. AP

TEHRAN

Two Iran Guards killed while clearing explosives after Israel war



Two members of Iran's Revolutionary Guards were killed on Sunday while attempting to defuse explosives in an area of the country's west hit by Israeli strikes last month. Separately, the Fars news agency reported the death of an Iranian soldier in Yazd in central Iran, from injuries sustained during one of Israel's attacks. AP

HUNT

Search for 27 missing girls on as Texas flash flood toll rises to 59



Rescuers in Texas raced against time to find dozens of missing people, including children, swept away by flash floods that killed at least 59, as forecasters warned of new deluges. Locals joined forces with disaster officials to search through the night for the missing, including 27 girls from a riverside Christian summer camp. AP

DUBAI

Ship on fire after being struck with 'unknown projectiles' in Red Sea



A ship traveling through the Red Sea is reportedly on fire after coming under attack on Sunday by armed men firing guns and launching rocket-propelled grenades, authorities said. One report said the unidentified vessel was later hit by what may have been bomb-carrying boats, setting it ablaze. AP

Israeli strikes kill at least 38 in Gaza as negotiation team heads for Qatar

Israeli Security Cabinet approves sending aid into northern Gaza, where civilians suffer from acute food shortages; Yemen's Houthis launch ballistic missiles targeting Israel's Ben Gurion airport overnight, which was intercepted by military forces

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH

Israeli air strikes killed at least 38 Palestinians in Gaza, hospital officials said on Sunday, as Israel was sending a ceasefire negotiating team to Qatar ahead of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's White House visit for talks toward a deal.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who will meet with Mr. Netanyahu on Monday, has floated a plan for an initial 60-day ceasefire that would include a partial release of hostages held by Hamas in exchange for an increase in humanitarian supplies allowed into Gaza.



Brexit News People evacuate a woman from a building hit by Israeli strikes in the Nuseirat camp in central Gaza. AP

The proposed truce calls for talks on ending the 21-month war along with civilians suffer from acute food shortages. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the decision with the media, declined to give more details.

Northern Gaza has seen just a trickle of aid enter since Israel ended the latest ceasefire in March. The Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's closest aid distribution site is near the Netzarim corridor south of Gaza City that separates the territory's north and south.

In Yemen, a spokesperson for the Iran-backed Houthis rebels announced that the group had launched ballistic missiles targeting Israel's Ben Gurion airport overnight. Israel's military said they were intercepted.

Israeli strikes hit two houses in Gaza City, killing 20 Palestinians and wounding 25 others.

In southern Gaza, Israeli strikes killed 18 Palestinians in Mawasi, an area on the Mediterranean coast where thousands of displaced people live in tents, officials at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis said. The territory's army was among the dead.

Mr. Bessent confirmed the comments made by Mr. Trump to reporters aboard the Air Force One on Friday. He said the deadline for the talks was "Well, I will probably

+ Taipei slams China's new air route passing over Taiwan Strait

Agence France-Presse
TAIPEI

Taipei condemned on Sunday China's move to open a sensitive aviation route that runs through the Taiwan Strait, warning the change could increase tensions between the two sides and "regional unease."

Taiwan's top China policy body criticized Beijing after its civil aviation authority opened another west-to-east connecting route above the sensitive waterway.

China has shown "complete disregard for the consensus of both sides and Taiwan's public opinion, using unilateral actions to change the status quo and increase cross-strait and regional unease," Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council said Sunday.

Beijing opens another west-to-east connecting route above the sensitive waterway.

Beijing adjusted the MS03 north-to-south route through the Taiwan Strait in January 2024 and opened two west-to-east connecting flight paths months later.

The newly-activated west-to-east route is intended to "alleviate the pressure caused by the increase of flights," China's Taiwan Affairs Office spokesman Chen Binhua said Sunday.

But Taipei's Mainland Affairs Council denied there had been an increase in air traffic.

Test of diplomacy



People gather in support of French detainees in Iran, Cecile Kohler and Jacques Paris, in Paris on Sunday. Lennart Monterios, an 18-year-old French teenager who was on a cycling trip in Iran, has also been missing since June 16, a diplomatic source said. AP

Musk launches a new political party in the aftermath of Trump fallout

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

Elon Musk, a former ally of U.S. President Donald Trump, said on Saturday he had launched a new political party in the United States to challenge what the tech billionaire described as the country's "one-party system."

The world's richest person — and Mr. Trump's biggest political donor in the 2024 election — had a bitter falling out with the President after leading the Republican leader's effort to slash spending in the United States and cut federal jobs as head of the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Mr. Musk has clashed with Mr. Trump over the president's massive domestic spending plan, saying it would explode the U.S. debt, and vowed to do everything in his power to defeat lawmakers who voted for it.

Now he has created the so-called America Party, his own political framework, through which to try and achieve that.

Returning freedom "When it comes to bankrupting our country with waste & graft, we live in a one-party system, not a democracy," the SpaceX and Tesla boss posted on X, the social media platform that he owns. "Today, the America

Party is formed to give you back your freedom," he added.

Mr. Musk cited a poll uploaded on Friday, U.S. Independence Day — in which he asked whether respondents "want independence from the two-party (some would say uni-party) system" that has dominated U.S. politics for some two centuries. The yes-or-no survey earned more than 1.2 million responses.

"By a factor of 2 to 1, you want a new political party and you shall have it," he posted on Saturday. Mr. Musk also shared a meme depicting a two-headed snake and the caption "End the Uni-party." It is not clear how much



Own career: Elon Musk said he has created the so-called America Party to challenge the country's 'one-party system'. AP

Impact the new party would have on the 2026 mid-term elections, or on the presidential vote two years after that.

The Trump-Musk feud reignited in dramatic fashion late last month as Mr. Trump pushed Republicans in Congress to ram through his massive domestic agenda in the form of the One Big Beautiful Bill. Mr. Musk expressed

fierce opposition to the legislation, and ruthlessly attacked its Republican backers for supporting "debt slavery."

He vowed to launch a new political party to challenge lawmakers who campaigned on reduced federal spending only to vote for the bill, which experts say will pile an extra \$3.4 trillion over a decade onto the U.S. deficit.

They will lose their primary next year if it is the last thing I do on this bill, which experts say will pile an extra \$3.4 trillion over a decade onto the U.S. deficit.

signed into law — Mr. Trump threatened to deport the tech tycoon and strip federal funds from his businesses.

"We will have to take a look," the President told reporters when asked if he would consider deporting Mr. Musk, who was born in South Africa and has held U.S. citizenship since 2002. On Friday after posting the poll, Mr. Musk laid out a possible political battle plan to "pick off" vulnerable House and Senate seats and become "the deciding vote" on key legislation.

"One way to execute on this would be to laser-focus on just two or three Senate seats and 8 to 10 House districts," Mr. Musk posted on X.

All 435 U.S. House seats are up for grabs every two years, while about one-third of the Senate's 100 members, who serve six-year terms, are elected every two years.

Splitting the vote Some observers were quick to point out how third-party campaigns have historically split the vote — as businessman Ross Perot's independent presidential run in 1992 did when it helped doom George H.W. Bush's re-election bid, resulting in Democrat Bill Clinton's victory. "You are pulling a Ross Perot, and I don't like it," one X user wrote to Mr. Musk.

Russia claims to have captured two east Ukraine settlements

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Russia said on Sunday it had captured another two settlements in east Ukraine, Piddubne in the Donetsk region and Sobolivka in the Kharkiv region.

Ukraine did not immediately comment on Russia's claims.

Moscow has been grinding forward on the front line for over a year.

Air travel disrupted Meanwhile, Russia and Ukraine struck each other with hundreds of drones on Sunday, throwing Russian air travel in disarray, days after Moscow launched its largest aerial assault in the more than 3-year-old war.

Photos on social media showed crowds huddled at



Russian airports including key international hubs in Moscow, while about one-third of the Senate's 100 members, who serve six-year terms, are elected every two years.

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Returning freedom

"When it comes to bankrupting our country with waste & graft, we live in a one-party system, not a democracy," the Space X and Tesla boss posted on X, the social media platform that he owns.

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Own course: Elon Musk said he has created the so-called America Party to challenge the country's 'one-party system'. AFP

impact the new party would have on the 2026 mid-term elections, or on the presidential vote two years after that.

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fierce opposition to the legislation, and ruthlessly attacked its Republican backers for supporting "debt slavery."

He vowed to launch a new political party to challenge lawmakers who campaigned on reduced federal spending only to vote for the Bill, which experts say will pile an extra \$3.4 trillion over a decade onto the U.S. deficit.

"They will lose their primary next year if it is the last thing I do on this Earth," Mr. Musk said earlier this week.

Deportation threat

After Mr. Musk heavily criticised the flagship spending Bill – which eventually passed Congress and was

signed into law – Mr. Trump threatened to deport the tech tycoon and strip federal funds from his businesses.

"We will have to take a look," the President told reporters when asked if he would consider deporting Mr. Musk, who was born in South Africa and has held U.S. citizenship since 2002.

On Friday after posting the poll, Mr. Musk laid out a possible political battle plan to pick off vulnerable House and Senate seats and become "the deciding vote" on key legislation.

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Some observers were quick to point out how third-party campaigns have historically split the vote – as businessman Ross Perot's independent presidential run in 1992 did when it helped doom George H.W. Bush's re-election bid, resulting in Democrat Bill Clinton's victory.

"You are pulling a Ross Perot, and I don't like it," one X user wrote to Mr. Musk.



1. Background:

- Elon Musk, billionaire and major Republican donor for the 2024 US elections, has launched a new political party.
 - The party, named '**America Party**', is intended to challenge what Musk calls the '**one-party system**' dominating US politics.
-

2. Reasons for Launch:

- Fallout with former ally **Donald Trump** over:
 - The **massive federal spending bill**, nicknamed the **One Big Beautiful Bill**, which adds \$3.4 trillion to US debt.
 - Musk's opposition to **domestic spending expansion** and "debt slavery."
- Musk's criticism of:
 - Wasteful spending.
 - Lack of fiscal discipline in the US political establishment.
- Desire to disrupt the dominance of the **two-party system** (Democrats and Republicans) that has existed for nearly two centuries.

3. Key Developments:

- Musk's **America Party**:
 - Aims to provide political alternatives and 'return freedom' to citizens.
 - Poll conducted on his platform 'X':
 - Over 1.2 million responses.
 - Two-thirds supported a new political party.
 - Shared a meme depicting a two-headed snake labelled '**End the Uniparty**'.
-

4. Trump-Musk Fallout:

- Trump opposed Musk's criticism of the spending bill.
- Threatened:
 - Deportation (Musk is originally from South Africa, a US citizen since 2002).
 - Revoking federal support for Musk's businesses.

5. Political Implications:

- **Midterm elections 2026:**
 - Musk plans to target vulnerable Senate and House seats to influence legislation.
 - **Third-Party Concerns:**
 - Historical fear of third parties splitting the conservative vote.
 - Example: Ross Perot's 1992 independent run, which contributed to Bill Clinton's victory.
-

6. Broader Context for UPSC:

- **Highlights:**
 - Rise of outsider influence in established democracies.
 - Role of billionaires in politics.
 - Impact of third parties on electoral outcomes.
 - Populism and anti-establishment sentiment in Western democracies.

- **Consider the following statements regarding recent political developments in the United States:**
- Elon Musk has launched a new political party called the 'America Party' in the United States.
- The America Party is aimed at supporting the existing two-party system.
- The America Party opposes increased federal spending and promotes fiscal conservatism.
- **Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**
- A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1 and 3 only
D) 1, 2 and 3

WHO 3 by 35 Initiative




-
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched the 3 by 35 Initiative, aiming to reduce harmful product consumption and generate sustainable public revenue through targeted health taxes.

What It Is?

A global initiative to increase the real prices of tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by **at least 50% by 2035** through higher taxes.

Launched By: The **World Health Organization** , in collaboration with global development partners, civil society, and governments.

Objective: To reduce consumption of harmful products, improve public health, and **mobilize US\$ 1 trillion in additional public revenue** by 2035, thereby supporting the Sustainable Development Goals.

- 
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched the 3 by 35 Initiative, aiming to reduce harmful product consumption and generate sustainable public revenue through targeted health taxes.



Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR)

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) conducted a ₹1 lakh crore 7-day Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR) auction to manage surplus liquidity, which had peaked at ₹3.75 lakh crore.

- **What is VRRR?**

- The Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR) is a monetary policy tool used by the **RBI to absorb excess liquidity** from the banking system for a fixed duration, with the interest rate determined through auction rather than being fixed.
- It allows banks to lend funds to the RBI for a period longer than one day — typically 7, 14, or 28 days — in exchange for interest.

Word of the day

Galumph:

move around heavily and clumsily

Synonyms: bound, jump, leap, spring

Usage: *The giant tortoises galumphed around in their pen.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/galumpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /gə'ʌmf/

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A blurred background image showing a group of people in a meeting or conference, with several hands raised in the air, suggesting applause or a group exercise. The image is out of focus, with the foreground hands being sharper than the background figures.

Thank you
guys.
