

The collage consists of several newspaper front pages and headlines arranged in a grid-like fashion. The top row includes a page from 'The Real Beast' with the headline 'THE REAL BEAST' and a sub-headline 'Not Trump's limo but protected thugs roam parts of Delhi; 4 killed as cops remain spectators'. Below this is a page from 'The Hindu' with the headline 'Donald Trump calls Modi a 'true friend', lavishes praise on PM'. To the right is a page from 'The Indian Express' with the headline 'Good Morning Indiamerica'. The bottom row features a page from 'Dainik Jagran' with the headline 'सीए पर यमुनापार में बढ़ी हिंसा, पांच की मौत' (Violence over CAA increases on Yamuna bridge, five deaths). Other visible headlines include 'Lawlessness, disorder as protesters run riot', 'Trump thrust on diversity', 'Aमेरिका को दिखी 'महाशक्ति'', 'Policeman among 5 killed in Delhi violence over CAA', and 'SI murder trail, NIA lurches searches in TN'.



जनसत्ता



THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS



3
The Hindu



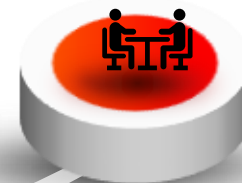
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**PIB, PRS & Other
newspaper**



2
**The Indian
Express**



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Jansatta



1
**Financial
Express**

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Validity: 6 months

Course level:

Language:

A further complication is the introduction in late July by Lloyd's Market Association of a new clause in war underwriters that terminates insurance coverage for a vessel if it has paid a ransom for a crew member through the Strait of Hormuz.

Ships sailing through the Strait need to pay an additional war risk premium to ensure they have in advance a ship's cargo damaged during piracy.

DMK sets its terms to back delimitation Bill

These conditions come amid renewed efforts from government to reach out to the Opposition to secure numbers for the Bill; top DMK leader says govt. has not approached them yet; though Centre doesn't have the two-thirds majority yet to push through a constitutional amendment, situation has changed since the Bill was introduced previously

Sandeep Phukan
Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

As the Narendra Modi government explores the possibility of bringing in a constitutional amendment Bill to carry out a fresh delimitation exercise, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) may consider extending support if the Centre revises the legislation that reached the Lok Sabha in April with three essential changes.

There is a freeze on Lok Sabha seats based on the 1971 Census and this freeze ends after the latest Census, which is expected to be completed in 2027. The DMK wants the constitutional freeze to remain for another 25 years, while amending the Constitution to introduce a 50% blanket increase in the Lok Sabha

seats for all States, which was verbally promised by Home Minister Amit Shah when the legislative package aimed at bringing about delimitation was tabled in Parliament in April.

Additionally, the party wants a Schedule of the number of seats that each State will have in the legislative package, as per sources in the DMK. A top DMK leader said that the government has not yet approached them on the issue either "formally or informally". The party maintains that it will take a final call only after the form and substance of the Bills are known.

These conditions come amid renewed efforts from the Centre to reach out to the Opposition, with Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju speaking to Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul

Terms for support

The DMK will support the NDA government's delimitation Bill only if the following conditions are met, according to sources

1. A freeze on the 1971 Census as the basis for delimitation for another 25 years

2. A blanket 50% increase in Lok Sabha seats for all States, as verbally promised by Home Minister Amit Shah when the legislative package to bring about delimitation was introduced in Parliament in April



3. A Schedule of the number of seats that each State will have in the legislative package

Gandhi again on Thursday. "I had a productive conversation with Rahul Gandhi. I have made a request on a few specific issues and also discussed other matters. We expect continuous communication with the Congress and other Opposition parties," he said.

He had met Mr. Gandhi on Wednesday too, during which the Congress lead-

ers are said to have reiterated their opposition to any constitutional amendment to carry out delimitation.

Though the government doesn't have the two-thirds majority yet to push through a constitutional amendment, the political situation has changed since April 17, when the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill was defeated on

the floor of the House. The numerical strength of the INDIA bloc has since vastly changed.

Numbers in Parliament

In the present 540-member Lok Sabha, the two-thirds majority mark is 360, and if 22 Lok Sabha members of the DMK vote for the Bill, the government's strength would go up to 346. While the government would still be short of 14 MPs, the threshold changes if there are abstentions during the proceedings. If the government brings the Bill to the Rajya Sabha, it will find it easier to reach the two-thirds majority mark. In the Rajya Sabha, if all 244 members are present for voting, the government will need 164 votes. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) currently has 158 MPs.

Home Minister Amit Shah had earlier said that once it is assured of the numbers, the government would once again bring the constitutional amendment Bill to increase the strength of the Lok Sabha to 850 seats in order to implement the 33% reservation for women after fresh delimitation.

Since April, the government has secured the support of 20 rebel Trinamool Congress MPs, who are now part of the National Citizens Party of India (NCPI), and six Shiv Sena MPs who had switched sides from the Uddhav Thackeray faction to the Eknath Shinde-led faction.

On Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be hosting NCPI and Shiv Sena MPs for a breakfast meeting.

In anticipation of the delimitation and the Foreign

Contribution (Regulation) Amendment (FCRA) Bills coming up next week, the Congress is all set to issue a three-line whip, asking its members to be present in Parliament next week.

Meanwhile, the Lok Sabha continued to be disrupted over the Opposition protests regarding police action against students.

Speaker Om Birla started the proceedings in the morning by commemorating the anniversaries of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and members stood in silence to pay tribute to the victims.

Thereafter, Opposition MPs began raising slogans, demanding the presence of Mr. Shah in the House over the police action against student protesters on July 20.

Some members were also seen displaying placards.

What is delimitation?

Delimitation means redrawing parliamentary and Assembly constituencies and deciding how many seats each State gets, broadly based on population.

India has effectively kept the **inter-State allocation of Lok Sabha seats frozen on the basis of the 1971 Census** for decades. This was intended to ensure that States which successfully controlled population growth were not politically penalised.

The constitutional freeze is linked to the **first Census conducted after 2026**. With Census 2027 approaching, the question of how seats will eventually be redistributed has become politically important.

DMK's three conditions

DMK condition	What it means	Why DMK wants it
1. Continue the 1971 Census-based freeze for another 25 years	States should not lose their relative representation because of population differences	Protects States such as Tamil Nadu that achieved lower fertility/population growth
2. Increase Lok Sabha seats by 50% for every State	Instead of redistributing the existing seats, substantially expand the House	Allows growing States to receive additional MPs without necessarily cutting southern States' representation
3. Give a State-wise seat schedule	The legislation should specify exactly how many seats every State will receive	Prevents uncertainty and allows States to assess the impact before supporting the Bill



Hypothetical approach	Tamil Nadu	Uttar Pradesh	Political consequence
Current allocation	39	80	Existing balance
Pure population redistribution	Could receive relatively fewer seats	Could receive substantially more	South's relative influence declines sharply
Expand House while protecting existing representation	Existing seats protected + some increase	Larger increase possible	Both gain seats, although relative power can still change

Item	MPs
Present Lok Sabha strength considered	540
Two-thirds majority	360
NDA strength	324
Rebel Trinamool Congress MPs reportedly supporting government	20
Shiv Sena (UBT) MPs reportedly supporting government	6
Potential strength	350
DMK MPs	22
Potential strength if DMK supports	372

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Potential strength if DMK supports	372



- **Census → Delimitation →
Redrawing constituencies →
Women's reservation implemented**



Argument supporting population-based delimitation

Every citizen's vote should have roughly comparable representation

High-population States are currently relatively underrepresented

Current allocation reflects population patterns from decades ago

Delimitation restores demographic proportionality

Larger population should logically mean more representatives



Southern States'/DMK concern

States shouldn't be punished for controlling population

Political influence would shift heavily toward northern States

Population control was itself a national policy

Federalism requires protecting States as political units

Population alone ignores governance and demographic performance



AND

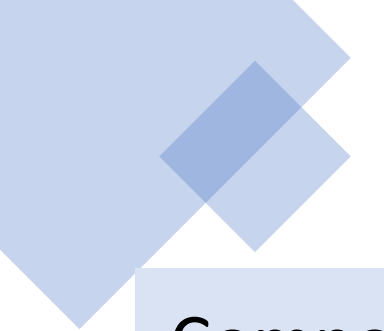


Agni-4 medium-range ballistic missile test-fired from Odisha

The medium-range ballistic missile Agni-4 was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha, on Thursday, with the launch validating all operational and technical parameters. The test was carried out under the aegis of Strategic Forces Command, the Defence Ministry said. The successful launch demonstrated the missile's operational readiness and confirmed that all critical systems performed in line with expected parameters, the Ministry said. Agni-4 is an indigenously developed medium-range ballistic missile capable of delivering conventional and nuclear payloads.

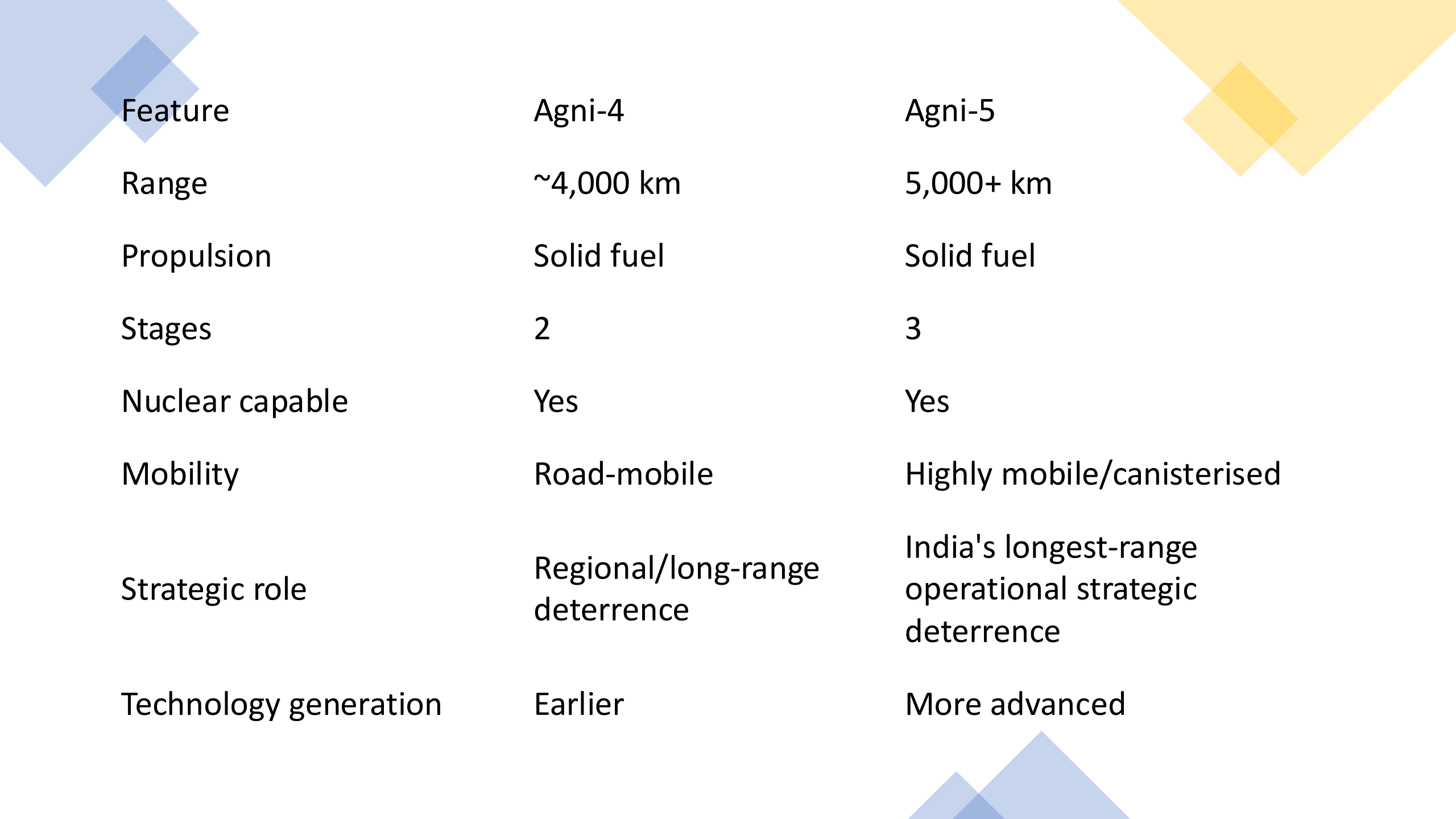
Aspect	Agni-4
Type	Medium/Intermediate-range ballistic missile
Developer	DRDO, India
Country	India IN
Approx. range	~4,000 km
Launch platform	Road-mobile launcher
Propulsion	Two-stage, solid fuel
Payload	Conventional or nuclear
Nuclear-capable	Yes
Operational control	Strategic Forces Command
Latest test location in article	ITR, Chandipur, Odisha
Main purpose of test	Validate operational & technical parameters

Missile	Approx. range	Broad significance
Prithvi-II	~350 km	Short-range
Agni-I	~700–900 km	Short/intermediate regional reach
Agni-II	~2,000 km+	Medium range
Agni-III	~3,000–3,500 km	Longer strategic reach
Agni-IV	~4,000 km	Long-range regional strategic deterrence
Agni-V	5,000 km+	Intercontinental-class strategic reach by common classification thresholds/near-ICBM strategic category
Agni-P	~1,000–2,000 km	New-generation, more mobile system



Component	Examples	Purpose
Land	Agni series	Mobile/fixed land-based deterrence
Air	Nuclear-capable aircraft	Flexible delivery option
Sea	Arihant-class SSBNs + submarine-launched ballistic missiles	Survivable second-strike capability





Feature

Agni-4

Agni-5

Range

~4,000 km

5,000+ km

Propulsion

Solid fuel

Solid fuel

Stages

2

3

Nuclear capable

Yes

Yes

Mobility

Road-mobile

Highly mobile/canisterised

Strategic role

Regional/long-range
deterrence

India's longest-range
operational strategic
deterrence

Technology generation

Earlier

More advanced

IN BRIEF

**LIC Q1 net at ₹13,492 cr. up 23% on premium, business**

Life Insurance Corporation of India's (LIC) standalone net profit for the first quarter rose 22.81% year-on-year (YoY) to ₹13,492 crore on higher premium income and a surge in value of new business (NBFC). Total premium income of the State-owned insurer increased 6.75% YoY to ₹1,27,250 crore. CEO and MD R.D. Doraiswamy said despite increasing competition in life insurance, LIC was able to maintain leadership in individual and group business during the quarter.

Milky Mist Dairy IPO opens on Aug. 11 at ₹133-140/share

Milky Mist Dairy Food Ltd. set price band of ₹133-140/share for its ₹1,553-crore initial public offering (IPO) opening for subscription on August 11. The IPO comprises fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to ₹1,428 crore and an Offer for Sale (OFS) of up to ₹125 crore. K. Rathnam, CEO, told *The Hindu* a part of the IPO funds would go towards closing debt and the rest investments. Singapore sovereign fund Temasek invested ₹482 crore in the firm in May, taking a 5% stake.

Lumina Datamatics acquires 100% stake of TNO Tech

Lumina Datamatics which is into content, retail support and technology solutions, said it acquired 100% stake in TNO Tech, a Chennai-based publishing technology firm. In 2024, the company signed a pact to buy 80% stake in TNO Tech. Marianne Ram, founder and director, TNO Tech, said "Our technology and domain expertise align perfectly with their scale and reach in scholarly publishing."

Govt. okays ₹23,371 cr. GOBARdhan scheme

The National Circular Bioenergy Scheme aspires to raise local production of CBG by tenfold, mobilise private investments on a large scale

Saptararn Ghosh
NEW DELHI

The Union cabinet approved the National Circular Bioenergy Scheme (GOBARdhan), provisioning ₹23,371 crore to catalyse the growth of compressed biogas (CBG). The GOBARdhan (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) outlay, to be in place until FY2035-36 seeks to raise local compressed biogas production almost tenfold via assured offtake, administered pricing, capital subsidies, boosting pipeline infrastructure and easier access to finance, the Centre said. The government emphasised the scheme would seek to impart a "strong and predictable framework" to fuel the up-tick of the CBG ecosystem.



Energy security: The compressed biogas plant at Brahmapuram currently processes about 50 tonnes of biodegradable waste a day.

The programme would involve the use of agricultural residue, cattle dung, sugar industry waste such as press mud, municipal organic waste and other biomass to produce compressed biogas, which can be blended into CNG used in automobiles and also piped natural gas (PNG). "This scheme delivers three," he said, adding, "moving from 300 operating plants towards 5,000 plants will create lakhs of rural jobs. Industry must respond with speed, quality and discipline."

Three imperatives
Welcoming the government initiative, A.K. Sha-

la, President of the Indian Biogas Association said the scheme addresses three imperatives — remunerative price, assured offtake and capital support — sought by the industry. "This scheme delivers three," he said, adding, "moving from 300 operating plants towards 5,000 plants will create lakhs of rural jobs. Industry must respond with speed, quality and discipline."

'Oil cargoes from Russian Black Sea ports down two-thirds'

M. Kalyanaraman
CHENNAI

The Ukraine-Russia conflict has led to a 66% cut in oil cargoes from Russian Black Sea ports in the last two weeks, said Bimco, a leading shipowners' association. Russia's Black Sea ports have the major share of India's crude imports

are secured till month end. If the situation persists beyond August, India will have to find alternative sources," said Pankaj Srivastava, SVT Ryntad. Meanwhile, at least five around the world were killed in ship attacks in Black Sea in July presuming India's oil imports. Two from a July 25 incident are still re-

ported missing. India has year-to-date seen the single largest destination from Black Sea ports, receiving 25% of the exports from Russian ports in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. On July 6, Ukraine unveiled Operation MoLoCh-Ka, a large-scale maritime drone campaign starting with Russia-linked ship-

ping in the Sea of Azov. Ukraine says it is aimed at disrupting Russian oil, fuel and cargo logistics. "Initially, the campaign reportedly targeted smaller ships operating from Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. On July 28, Ukraine claimed over 200 ships had been attacked," says Niels Rasmussen, Bimco's chief shipping

analyst. Ukraine's drone operation hit Sea of Azov shipments and reportedly contributed to Russia suspending navigation via Kerch Strait and Don-Azov Canal, impacting exports. Oil loadings from the Caspian Pipeline Consortium terminal in Novorossiysk fell 62% in past two weeks compared with the previous four weeks, he says.

+ July auto retail sales surged 26% to almost 26 lakh units

Lalatedu Mishra
MUMBAI

In July, Indian automobile industry retailed 25,91,138 units, up 26% year-on-year, making it the strongest July growth in the series outside COVID-distorted base years, said Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA).

Growth was broad-based with wheeled construction equipment sales up 46%, two-wheelers (2W) up 28.2%, tractors 28.1%, commercial vehicles (CV) up 24%, passenger vehicles (PV) 19.13% and three-wheelers (3W) up 16.2% as per FADA data. Total EV retail sales touched 3,27,001 units, the highest for any month



Commercial Vehicle retails at 99,666 units grew 24%, secured

in history — with 2W and CV EV volumes at a record, taking overall EV growth 9.6% a year ago. Sai Giridhar, VP, FADA said, "July etched itself into Indian auto retail history — for the first time on record, every single category posted

ed its best-ever July with two- and three-wheelers, CVs, PVs, tractors and wheeled construction equipment all at all-time July highs.

GST 2.0 momentum
"Dealers attribute this momentum to GST 2.0-led affordability, ease of retail finance and favourable festival timing on a July 2025 base that had slid at most 4%, alongside a quiet infection that deserves the industry's attention: alternative fuels are now within striking distance of 12.7% in the PV market," he said. "With FY27's first four months EV retail sales up 18.27%, the runway into the festive season is firmly intact," he added.

Taxation bill passed in the Lok Sabha

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Taxation and other Laws (Amendment) Bill, through which the government wants to promote domestic electronics manufacturing, attract foreign funds and modify the zero MDR framework on digital payments was passed by the Lok Sabha. The intention of the government behind bringing the Bill is to make India a more attractive and predictable place for global investment, manufacturing and business to come and stay. The Taxation and other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, replaces the June 5 Ordinance that provided 1% exemption to interest income and capital gains made by FPIs from invest-



The bill would allow merchant charges on UPI transactions. At a meeting held with the Joint Secretary (Sugar) and the Minister for Sugar and Bio-energy Manufacturers Association and the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories committed the mills to advance the sugarcane crushing schedule. This proactive decision will enable fresh sugar to reach the local market well ahead of the festive season, the associations said.

Sugar mills to advance cane crushing schedule

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Sugar mills will start operating 10-15 days before the normal schedule for the 2026-2027 sugar marketing season to ensure availability of sugar during the festive season. At a meeting held with the Joint Secretary (Sugar) and the Minister for Sugar and Bio-energy Manufacturers Association and the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories committed the mills to advance the sugarcane crushing schedule. This proactive decision will enable fresh sugar to reach the local market well ahead of the festive season, the associations said.

Bajaj General, Swiss Re arm ink commercial insurance MoU

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Bajaj General Insurance (Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company) and Swiss Re Corporate Solutions have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to explore a commercial insurance partnership in India. The partnership, subject to definitive agreements and applicable regulatory requirements, aims to leverage Swiss Re Corporate Solutions' international insurance market in the world and we are exploring new ways to better serve corporate clients in this dynamic market with Bajaj General Insurance," said Swiss Re Corporate Solutions CEO Ivan Gonzalez. Multinational corpora-

Swiss Re arm gives risk solutions for businesses from property insurance to specialist segments

critical for the Indian economy, including food, manufacturing and construction sectors. It is also proposed to offer international insurance programmes for Indian companies operating abroad. "India is the fastest-growing major commercial insurance market in the world and we are exploring new ways to better serve corporate clients in this dynamic market with Bajaj General Insurance," said Swiss Re Corporate Solutions CEO Ivan Gonzalez. Multinational corpora-

tions increasingly expect local market expertise with global capabilities and the preferred bidder for the Gadadhar Insurance operation, he said. Swiss Re Corporate Solutions, which is the commercial insurance arm of Swiss Re Group, provides risk solutions for businesses ranging from property insurance to specialist segments like credit and surety and including alternative risk transfer solutions like captives and parametric insurance. "We aim to support Indian companies wherever they do business and help multinational organisations navigate risk effectively in India," Bajaj General Insurance managing director and CEO, Tapan Singhel said.

Coal India forays into iron ore mining

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

State-owned CIL, emerged as the preferred bidder for the Gadadhar Iron ore block in Odisha, marking the country's largest coal miner's foray into iron ore mining. Coal India Ltd. (CIL) is mainly engaged in mining and production of coal and accounts for over 80% of the country's coal output. The move further signals CIL's broader diversification plan amid a long-term energy transition. The lease has been awarded on an auction premium of 14.05% of the value of mineral dispatched. CIL's entry into iron ore mining aligns with the government's push to boost

local production of critical minerals and secure raw material supply chains for the steel sector, which is central to the country's infrastructure and manufacturing ambitions. The block is at the G3 exploration stage with a total resource estimated at 248 million tonnes. CIL said in a filing with the BSE. CIL's exploration stage block is a mineral mining area under preliminary exploration. Its purpose is to zoom in on smaller target zones identified during broad regional surveys, using closer spaced sampling, mapping, pitting, and initial core drilling to estimate mineral content. The block has been awarded to the PSU by the Government of Odisha.

SEBI plans revamp of securities lending

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Markets regulator SEBI is planning to revamp securities lending and borrowing framework and undertake a pilot project on tokenisation of corporate bonds using distributed ledger technology as part of its agenda for 2026-27 and beyond. Outlining the regulator's roadmap in SEBI's annual report, Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said the regulator will continue to focus on removing regulatory redundancies, simplifying procedural requirements and leveraging technology to ease the compliance burden.

Govt. okays ₹23,371 cr. GOBARdhan scheme

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Saptaparno Ghosh

NEW DELHI

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The GOBARdhan (Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan) outlay, to be in place until FY2035-36 seeks to raise local compressed biogas production almost tenfold via assured offtake, administered pricing, capital subsidies, boosting pipeline infrastructure and easier access to finance, the Centre said.

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Energy security: The compressed biogas plant at Brahmapuram currently processes about 50 tonne of biodegradable waste a day.

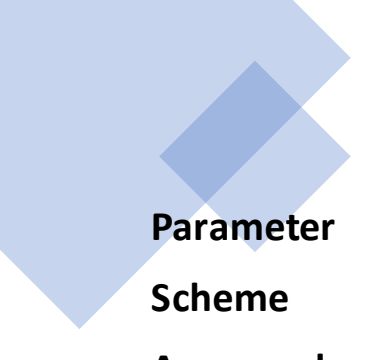
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Three imperatives

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“This scheme delivers all three,” he said, adding, “moving from 300 operating plants towards 5,000 [plants] will create lakhs of rural jobs. Industry must respond with speed, quality and discipline.”



Parameter

Scheme

Approved outlay

Duration

Main objective

Production ambition

Current operating plants mentioned

Industry ambition mentioned

Inputs

Main output

CBG use

Government support

Wider benefits

Details

National Circular Bioenergy Scheme – GOBARdhan

₹23,371 crore

Up to FY 2035-36

Expand domestic CBG production

Nearly 10-fold increase

~300

Towards 5,000 plants

Cattle dung, crop residue, press mud, municipal organic waste, other biomass

Compressed Biogas (CBG)

Vehicle fuel + blending/use with CNG/PNG systems

Assured offtake, administered pricing, capital subsidies, pipeline infrastructure and easier finance

Energy security, waste management, lower emissions and rural employment



- **What exactly is CBG?**
- Organic material such as:
- **Cattle dung + crop residue + food/municipal organic waste + sugar-industry press mud**
- undergoes anaerobic digestion and produces **biogas**.
- Raw biogas contains mainly methane along with CO₂ and impurities. After purification and compression, methane-rich gas becomes **Compressed Biogas (CBG)**.
- In simplified form:
- **Organic waste → Anaerobic digestion → Raw biogas → Purification → Compression → CBG**
- CBG can substitute for fossil-based natural gas in several applications.



Industry problem

Investors uncertain about who will buy CBG

Uncertainty over commercially viable prices

High initial plant cost

Difficulty transporting gas

Difficulty obtaining project finance

Feedstock/waste-management challenge

Scheme response



Assured offtake

Administered/remunerative pricing

Capital support/subsidies

Pipeline infrastructure support

Easier access to finance

Structured use of agricultural and organic waste



• **HEALTH**

Talcum powder causes cancer? Not always, but use with caution

Rinku Ghosh & Purnima Sah
New Delhi, Mumbai, August 6

JOHNSON & JOHNSON (J&J) recently agreed to pay billions of dollars to settle lawsuits alleging that its talcum powder products caused ovarian cancer and other illnesses because they contained asbestos, a known carcinogen. The company has consistently denied that its talc products were unsafe and says the settlement is intended to end years of costly litigation.

In 2020, J&J stopped selling talc-based baby powder in the US and Canada. In 2023, it discontinued talc-based baby powder globally, replacing it with a cornstarch-based formulation.

What is the scientific consensus on the link between talcum powder and ovarian cancer?

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classifies talc, not containing asbestos, as “probably” carcinogenic to humans, based on limited evidence in humans and sufficient evidence in animal studies. But there isn’t enough evidence to support that talc is a “definite” carcinogen for ovarian cancer, said Dr Gau-

ravi Mishra, Deputy Director, Centre for Cancer Epidemiology (CCE), Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai. “Prospective cohort studies... have generally not shown a statistically significant increase in risk for ovarian cancer,” she said.

How can asbestos contaminate talc?

Talc and asbestos are naturally occurring silicate minerals that may co-form within the same geological deposits. “Contamination of talc with asbestos is dependent on the mine of origin and the rigour of ore screening, and is not an inherent property of the consumer talc product itself. Mining of asbestos is banned in India. Existing tests are not sensitive enough to reliably exclude trace asbestos contamination. Hence, there is no standardised testing method currently recommended by any regulatory body,” said Dr Ashwin Sathyan, senior resident, Department of Preventive Oncology, CCE.

Should talc users be concerned?

There is no cause for alarm among long-term users of talcum powder. This position is consistent across IARC and independent reviews. “Prior use should not be attributed as the cause of any current symptoms with-

Asbestos and talc: The link

- Talc and asbestos are naturally occurring silicate minerals that may co-form within the same geological deposits.
- Contamination of talc with asbestos is dependent on the mine of origin and the rigour of ore screening, and is not an inherent property of the consumer talc product itself.

out appropriate clinical evaluation. Women with a family history of ovarian or breast cancer are advised to discuss this concern with their physician,” said Dr Mishra.

Are there any guidelines on its use?

No major regulatory or scientific body has issued a prohibition on talcum powder use on any body part, including the genital area. “But its use on open wounds or sensitive skin is not recommended, as it may lead to irritation or mineral toxicity,” said Dr Mishra. Regulatory policy in India is still under development and scrutiny, she said.

There are more caveats on its use. Dr Pralhad Rathod, professor and HOD, dermatology at JJ Hospital, Mumbai, said that body powder should be avoided altogether for babies, especially near the nose and the mouth. He also said it should be avoided by individuals with asthma or chronic respiratory diseases; on raw, broken, inflamed, or infected skin; when there is an undiagnosed genital rash; where the powder repeatedly cakes with sweat and increases friction; and in poorly ventilated areas.

“Talc is not a reason for panic but it is also not an indispensable personal care product. Given the remaining uncertainty,

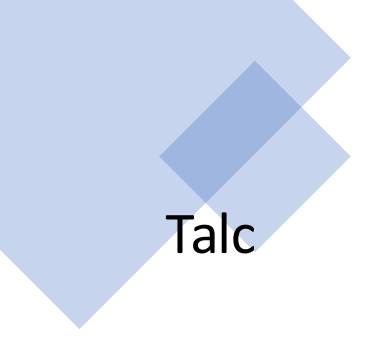
the prudent approach is to choose a traceable, talc-free product where a powder is genuinely needed,” said Dr Usha Khemani, associate professor of dermatology, JJ Hospital, Mumbai.

Cornstarch-based powders are a reasonable substitute, being free of any asbestos-contamination pathway. “They aren’t linked in literature to ovarian cancer risk. Body powders of either type are best avoided on broken or irritated skin, on post-surgical or post-partum wounds, and in infants, where inhalation risk is highest,” said Dr Mishra.

Are India-made talcs safe?

Available India-specific data is limited and in its early stages. “Tremolite asbestos was found in seven of 13 commercially available Indian talc products tested, and an earlier Indian Institute of Toxicology Research report similarly identified asbestos fibres in five Indian brands,” said Dr Sathyan.

The IARC hazard classification is not a calculation of the risk from the occasional personal use. “This means that under certain exposure circumstances, the substance is capable of causing cancer; it does not mean that every user — or even most users — will develop cancer,” says Dr Rathod.



Talc

Naturally occurring silicate mineral

Used in powders/cosmetics and industrial applications

Talc deposits can occur geologically near asbestos

Talc itself is not the same thing as asbestos

Contamination is possible depending on source/mining



Asbestos

Group of naturally occurring fibrous silicate minerals

Historically used for heat/fire resistance and insulation

Known human carcinogen

Inhalation exposure can cause serious diseases

No safe assumption should be made about contaminated talc



- 
- **Why can talc contain asbestos?**
 - Talc and asbestos minerals can form in **similar geological environments**.
 - Therefore, during mining:
 - **Talc deposit + nearby asbestos-bearing minerals → possibility of contamination**
 - The article stresses that asbestos contamination is **not an inherent property of talc**. It depends on the geological source and the effectiveness of mining, ore screening and testing.

What about ovarian cancer?

This has been the major controversy.

The article says prospective cohort studies generally **have not demonstrated a statistically significant increase in ovarian cancer risk.**

Therefore, the scientific evidence does not justify saying:

"Using talcum powder causes ovarian cancer."

The evidence is considerably more nuanced.

Why is Johnson & Johnson mentioned?

The article refers to litigation involving **Johnson & Johnson** over allegations that talc products contained asbestos and contributed to ovarian cancer and other illnesses.

J&J has disputed claims that its products were unsafe.

The company stopped selling talc-based baby powder in the **US and Canada in 2020**, and in **2023 discontinued talc-based baby powder globally**, replacing it with a **cornstarch-based formulation**, according to the article.

The litigation and product change should not themselves be interpreted as scientific proof that every talc product causes cancer.

- **Indian products: what did researchers find?**
- According to an expert quoted in the article:
- **Tremolite asbestos was detected in 7 of 13 commercially available Indian talc products tested.**
- An earlier Indian Institute of Toxicology Research report reportedly identified asbestos fibres in **five Indian brands**.
- However, these findings **do not mean every Indian talcum powder contains asbestos**. The sample sizes are limited, and the article explicitly says India-specific data remain limited and at an early stage.



Situation

Babies

Asthma/chronic respiratory disease

Broken/raw skin

Inflamed/infected skin

Post-surgical wounds

Post-partum wounds

Undiagnosed genital rash

Poorly ventilated areas

Powder repeatedly caking with sweat

Recommendation/reason

Avoid, particularly around nose and mouth

Avoid inhalation exposure

Avoid

Avoid

Avoid

Avoid

Avoid

Avoid because inhalation exposure increases

Can increase irritation/friction



Prof. Karthikeyan Lanka
of IIT Bombay has been
selected for the NASI
Young Scientist Award
2026.

Point

Scientist

Institution

Position

Department/Centre

Additional role

Award

Awarding body

Award ceremony

Dates

Venue

NASI established

NASI headquarters

Importance of NASI

Details

Prof. Karthikeyan Lanka

IIT Bombay

Associate Professor

Centre of Studies in Resources Engineering (CSRE)

Associate faculty, Interdisciplinary Programme in Climate Studies

NASI Young Scientist Award 2026

National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI)

During NASI's **96th Annual Session & Symposium**

4–5 December 2026

Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi

1930

Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

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SCIENCE ACADEMY	HEADQUARTERS	ESTABLISHED
National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI)	Prayagraj	1930
Indian Academy of Sciences (IASc)	Bengaluru	1934
Indian National Science Academy (INSA)	New Delhi	1935

A photograph of two people in orange life jackets and blue shirts in a red inflatable raft on a river. The raft is navigating through white-water rapids. A black paddle is visible in the water. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the river and the surrounding environment. The text 'Asian Rafting Championships 2026' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Asian Rafting Championships 2026

Point	Details
Event	Asian Rafting Championships 2026
Host location	Boleng, Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh
Dates	5–9 October 2026
Duration	5 days
River/Venue	Simang River
River classification	Class III+
Simang River	Tributary of the Siang River
Participants	Paddlers/rafting teams from across Asia
Main disciplines	Sprint, RX and Slalom
Arunachal Pradesh CM	Pema Khandu
State minister mentioned	Ojing Tasing — Panchayati Raj & Rural Development Minister

Discipline

What happens?

Sprint

Speed race over a short course

RX

Head-to-head/knockout racing
between teams

Slalom

Teams navigate through a series of
gates in moving water

Glaw Lake becomes Ramsar Site	Glaw Lake, Arunachal Pradesh was designated a Ramsar Site; it became India's 101st Ramsar Site and Arunachal Pradesh's first Ramsar Site.  The Times of India
Asian Rafting Championships 2026	Boleng, Siang district to host Asian Rafting Championships from 5–9 Oct 2026; competition on the Simang River, a tributary of Siang.
Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project	2,000 MW, on Subansiri River at Arunachal–Assam border; 8 × 250 MW units. Two units had been commissioned by March; remaining units planned in phases through Dec 2026. Implemented by NHPC.  Press In...
Arunachal Budget 2026–27	Presented by Deputy CM Chowna Mein on 10 March 2026. Estimated GSDP ₹41,341 crore; net expenditure ₹35,295 crore.  PRS Legis...
Vibrant Villages Programme	Arunachal remains one of the major beneficiaries of VVP-I, aimed at development of northern-border villages through roads, telecom, tourism, livelihoods, health and education.  Press Information...
Exercise Jal Aapda	Joint flood-relief exercise conducted in Tawang sector, 11–12 May 2026, by Gajraj Corps with district administration, NDRF, SDRF, NCC etc.

2026 Statehood Day	20 February is Arunachal Pradesh Statehood Day. The state government calendar lists it as an official holiday.  Arunachal State ...
Rainbow trout from Mechukha	Fisheries department flagged off rainbow trout from Mechukha for wider markets, highlighting cold-chain and sustainable fisheries development.  Arunachal Times
Seed/Biodiversity festival	Biodiversity and seed festival held at Yazali, Lower Subansiri , focusing on seed sovereignty and ecological preservation.  Arunachal Times
TEJAS entrepreneurship workshop	Startup India/DPIIT conducted a TEJAS workshop at Anini to support grassroots entrepreneurs.  Arunachal Times
Nyishi & Adi languages research	2026 research examined rhythmic/spectral characteristics of Nyishi and Adi , both belonging to the Tani linguistic grouping.  arXiv
Idu Mishmi digital keyboard	Researchers developed mobile/desktop keyboard tools for endangered Idu Mishmi language, spoken in Arunachal Pradesh.  arXiv

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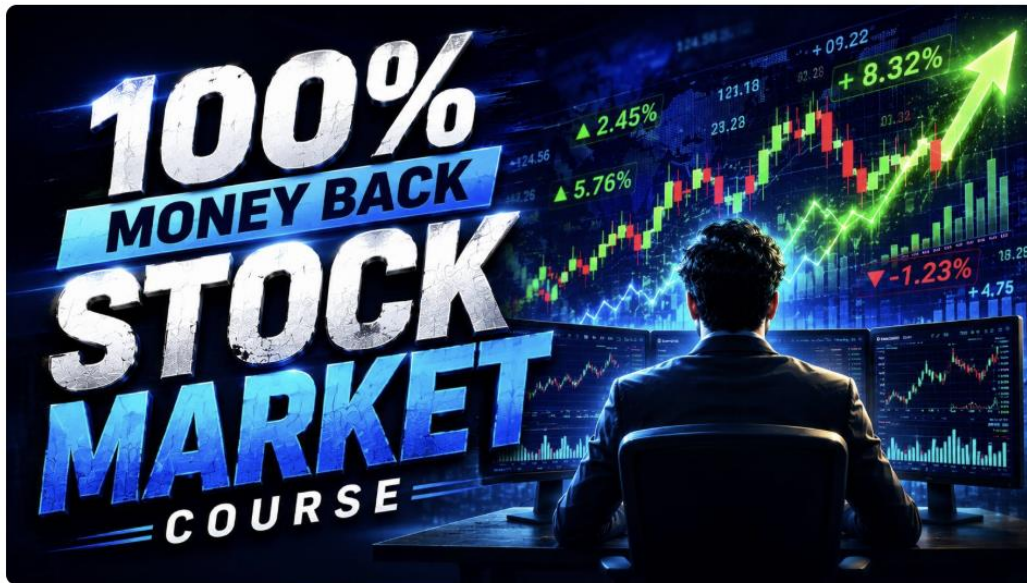


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THE DAILY QUIZ

A quiz on the occasion of National Handloom Day celebration

V.V. Ramanan

▶ **QUESTION 1**

Why was August 7 chosen as the National Handloom Day?

▶ **QUESTION 2**

After whom is the country's highest recognition for handloom weavers who have demonstrated extraordinary craftsmanship and dedication to the preservation and promotion of India's weaving traditions named?

▶ **QUESTION 3**

Which State is synonymous with the Wangkhei Phee and Shapee Lanphee

weaves?



QUESTION 4

Name the master weaver of the Gods in Hindu mythology from whom the silk weavers of Kanchipuram consider their descent.



QUESTION 5

What is special about Eri silk, locally called Ryndia, from Meghalaya?



QUESTION 6

Which popular weave from Central India was patronised by Queen Ahilyabai Holkar?



QUESTION 7

Where is the Calico Museum of Textiles located?



Visual Question:

Name this social reformer affectionately called 'Hatkargha Maa' (Handloom Mother) for her monumental role in reviving and promoting handlooms.

Word of the day

Encomium:

a formal expression of praise

Synonyms: tribute, commendation,
homage

Usage:

The teacher gave an encomium to the student for her hard work.

Pronunciation: newsth.live/encomium

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɪnkəʊmiəm/





Thank you 😊

