

Daily Current Affairs



जनसत्ता



The Indian EXPRESS

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS



4
The Hindu



0
**PIB, PRS & Other
newspaper**



2
**The Indian
Express**

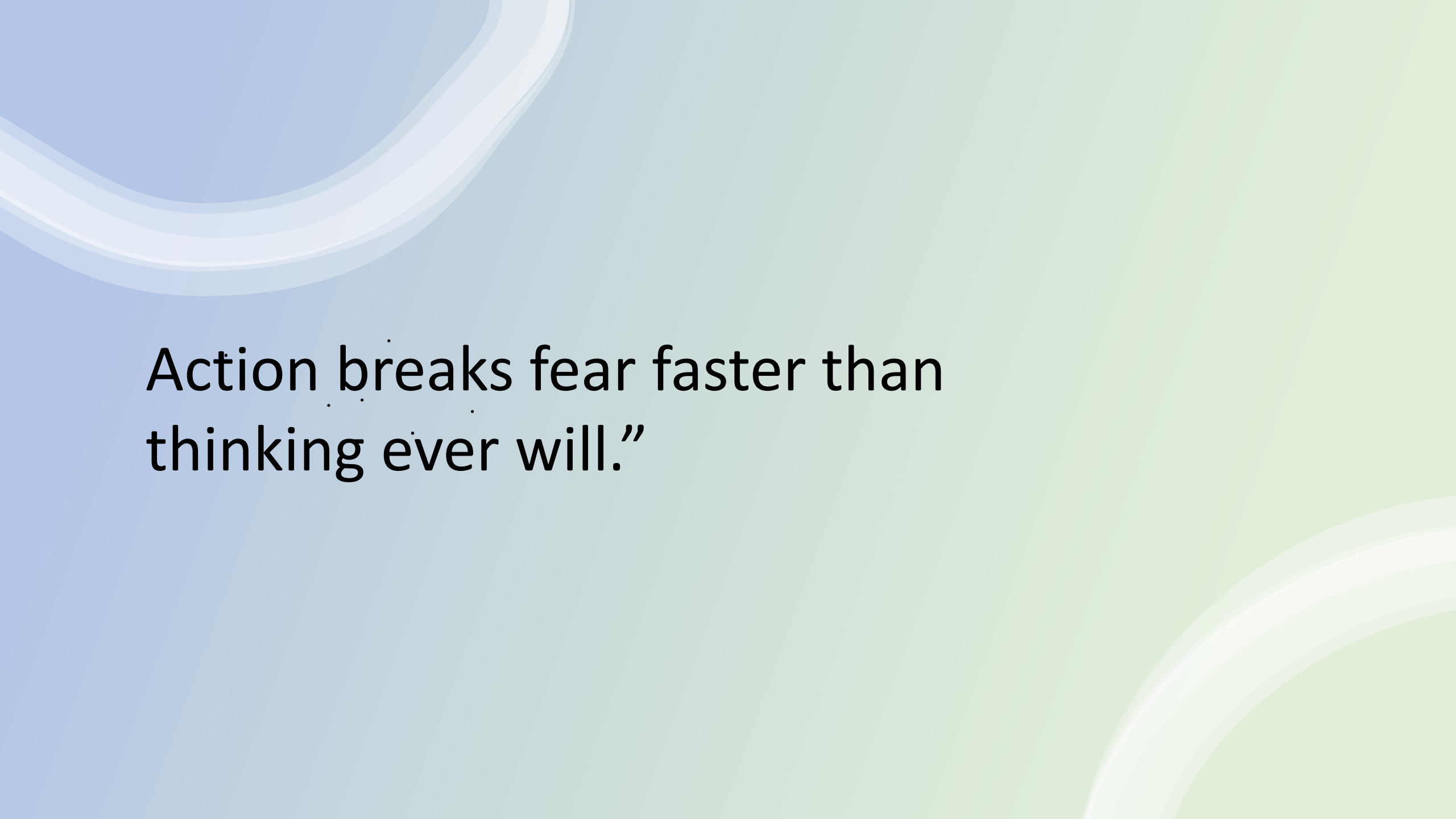


0
Jansatta

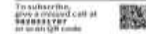


1
**Financial
Express**





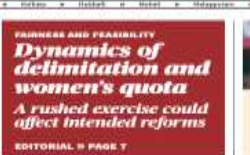
Action breaks fear faster than
thinking ever will.”



POLICE VISIT
Assam CM's wife files case against Khera
NEWS » PAGE 3



NUCLEAR BREAKTHROUGH
A 'critical' leap forward for Kalpakkam PFB reactor
NEWS » PAGE 3



POST SC ORDER
NCERT reconstitutes textbook committee
NEWS » PAGE 3



THE ARCHITECT
Jaiswal in full flow as Royals go to the top
SPORT » PAGE 3

INSIDE



Gun battle near Israeli consulate leaves one dead
TEL AVIV
One attacker was killed and two others were wounded in an extended gun battle with police outside the Israeli consulate in Istanbul of Turkey on Tuesday. » PAGE 14



Kerala, Telangana CMs spar over course language
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Chief Minister of poll-bound Kerala, Pinarayi Velayudhan, and his Telangana counterpart, A. Revanth Reddy, sparred on social media on Tuesday, accusing each other of employing course language in politics. » PAGE 2



Sri Lanka is to offer fertilizer, fuel subsidies
COLOMBO
Sri Lanka on Tuesday rolled out relief measures to help citizens hit by the war in West Asia. President Anura Kumara Dissanayake announced fuel and fertilizer subsidies, and an increase in the cash transfer for the poor. » PAGE 14



War, waivers, and trade on Mistr's agenda for U.S.
NEW DELHI
Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra will begin his three-day visit to U.S. on April 8. Trade talks, the ongoing U.S. - Iran war with Iran, as well as the U.S. sanctions waters on Russian and Iranian oil is likely to be on his agenda. » PAGE 2

West Bengal voters shrink 12% after reviews

The latest exclusions take total names deleted in the poll-bound State since SIR began to 91 lakh | Highest number of deletions in Murshidabad, followed by North 24 Parganas and Malda | The fate of 27 lakh excluded voters lies with 19 tribunals; they cannot exercise their franchise

Shrabana Chatterjee
Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Over 27 lakh West Bengal voters who were put under adjudication were excluded from the electoral rolls following the completion of the judicial reviews on Tuesday, with over a quarter of each district's electorate being deleted from voters' lists. The process began, meaning that West Bengal's electorate has shrank almost 12%, from 7.99 crore voters in October 2018 to 6.75 crore now, days ahead of the Assembly election in 2021. In the Assembly election in 2001, 7.34 crore voters were eligible. This time, the number is about 63 lakh electors.

Falling numbers
The table shows the top-five (left) and bottom-five (right) West Bengal districts in deletion of voters. Figures are in lakhs.

District	Deletions	Percentage
North 24 Parganas	2,14,000	3.06%
South 24 Parganas	1,92,000	2.78%
North 2 Parganas	1,88,000	2.72%
West Medinipur	1,85,000	2.69%
West Bardhaman	1,82,000	2.64%
Malda	1,78,000	2.59%
North 2 Parganas	1,75,000	2.51%
West Medinipur	1,72,000	2.46%
West Bardhaman	1,68,000	2.39%
North 24 Parganas	1,65,000	2.34%
West Medinipur	1,62,000	2.31%
West Bardhaman	1,58,000	2.26%
North 24 Parganas	1,55,000	2.21%
West Medinipur	1,52,000	2.17%
West Bardhaman	1,48,000	2.12%

of each district's electorate being deleted from voters' lists. The process began, meaning that West Bengal's electorate has shrank almost 12%, from 7.99 crore voters in October 2018 to 6.75 crore now, days ahead of the Assembly election in 2021. In the Assembly election in 2001, 7.34 crore voters were eligible. This time, the number is about 63 lakh electors.

under adjudication, followed by Malda, another Muslim-dominated district, with 2.30 lakh deletions. Last chance: The fate of the 27 lakh excluded voters now lies with 19 appellate tribunals set up across the State, and people started showing their faces before the exclusion that was released. However, for this election where polling is held in on April 23 and 29, these voters have run out of chance to exercise their franchise. On Monday, the Supreme Court rejected the West Bengal government's plea to delay the locking of the electoral rolls to give a last chance for the 27 lakh voters who did not pass judicial scrutiny. Of the 294 constituencies in the Assembly, 182 will go to the

'Earthset' boulevard



The white slide An 'earthset' where each slip beyond the lunar horizon, as seen from the Orion quadrant of the Artemis 1 lunar flyby mission on Monday. The four astronauts on NASA's flyby mission on Monday marked the furthest humans have been from the planet, AFP.

Renewed violence in Manipur leaves 4 dead



People block a road in protest in Bishnupur district, Manipur, after two children were killed in a bomb attack on Tuesday. The Bishnupur district administration imposed restrictions on the movement of people, while the State government suspended mobile internet services across five Imphal Valley districts for three days. Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said that the government had decided to hand over case to the National Investigation Agency (NIA). "The act appears to be the handwork of individuals or groups with vested interests in disturbing the prevailing peace in the State," he said.

Supreme Court begins review of 2018 ruling on Sabarimala shrine

Krishnakant Balagopal
NEW DELHI

Justice B.V. Nagarathna, part of the Supreme Court Constitution bench hearing a reference spurred by a 2018 judgment upholding the right of women of menstruating age to enter the Sabarimala shrine in Kerala, said on Tuesday that social ills cannot be eradicated and passed off as 'essential' religious practices. The Union government said the legislature, not courts, drive reforms in religion, if need be. If social evils are given a religious colour, then courts can intervene to distinguish between the two, Justice Nagarathna said.

If social evils are given a religious colour, then the courts can intervene to distinguish between the two, Justice Nagarathna said.

cial policy' for constitutional courts while dealing with questions of right to religious freedom enshrined in Article 25 and a denominational privilege to manage its own religious affairs under Article 26 of the Constitution. "How can the courts then examine the essentially religious practices of a denomination which does not otherwise offend public order, morality, and health?" Mr. Mishra asked. The final part of the reference is how far the courts can use their powers to judicially review religious practices considered "essential or core" in the name of ushering in social reform. The Centre argued whether the judges had the expertise to decide if a ritual or a manner of devotion was merely superstitious or an essential religious practice. "The essentiality of a religious practice may not fall within the domain of judicial review," Mr. Mishra said. "Judges are not experts in science, sociology, anthropology, or history. It is empowered by the Evidence Act to examine the opinions of scientific experts and become an expert of experts," Justice Jyotsna Singh observed. Justice M.M. Sundresh observed that the court can use their powers to judicially review religious practices considered "essential or core" in the name of ushering in social reform. The Centre argued whether the judges had the

A civilisation will die in Iran if deal not accepted, says Trump on 'deadline' day



U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday threatened that "a whole civilization will die" if Iran does not accept his deal and reopen the Strait of Hormuz before his 8 p.m. Eastern Time (6:30 a.m. on Wednesday in India) deadline. Tehran, in turn, issued a warning that its response would deprive the U.S. and its allies of oil and gas for years. U.S. Vice-President JD Vance, who is in Hungary, said his country has "looked in our toolkit that we so far haven't decided to use" against Iran, without elaborating further. The White House later said the Vance did not mean use of nuclear weapons.

Iran strikes on Kharg island



Iranian children in Tehran on Tuesday mark 46 days since the fatal strike on a girls' primary school during the ongoing war against the U.S. "Iran's Revolution is not a religion, it is a way of life," said Mr. Trump in a statement on Tuesday. The statement, from both sides came as Tehran reported the U.S. and Israel had already begun attacking key infrastructure of the country beyond the region. The Iran's Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) said "we were used by the Revolutionary Guards" were targeted. Iran's Mehr news agency reported that U.S.

Iranian children in Tehran

Iranian children in Tehran on Tuesday mark 46 days since the fatal strike on a girls' primary school during the ongoing war against the U.S. "Iran's Revolution is not a religion, it is a way of life," said Mr. Trump in a statement on Tuesday. The statement, from both sides came as Tehran reported the U.S. and Israel had already begun attacking key infrastructure of the country beyond the region. The Iran's Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) said "we were used by the Revolutionary Guards" were targeted. Iran's Mehr news agency reported that U.S.

West Bengal voters shrink 12% after reviews

The latest exclusions take total names deleted in the poll-bound State since SIR began to 91 lakh

Highest number of deletions in Murshidabad, followed by North 24 Parganas and Malda

The fate of 27 lakh excluded voters lies with 19 tribunals; they cannot exercise their franchise

Shrabana Chatterjee

Shiv Sahay Singh

KOLKATA

Over 27 lakh West Bengal voters who were put under adjudication were excluded from the electoral rolls following the completion of the judicial reviews on Tuesday, with over a quarter of such deletions occurring in two Muslim-dominated districts.

In all, 91 lakh names have been deleted from the State's voter list since the special intensive revision (SIR) began, meaning that West Bengal's electorate has shrunk almost 12%, from 7.66 crore electors in October 2025 to 6.75 crore now, days ahead of the Assembly election. In the Assembly election in 2021, 7.34 crore voters were eligible to cast their ballot.

About 63 lakh electors

Falling numbers

The table shows the top-five (red) and bottom-five (blue) West Bengal districts in deletion of voter names that were under adjudication for 'logical discrepancies'



Choice on the line: People whose names were deleted from voters' lists queue up to present their cases before judicial officers in Nadia, West Bengal, on Tuesday. PTI

District Name	Deletions
Murshidabad	4,55,137
North 24 Parganas	3,25,666
Malda	2,39,375
South 24 Parganas	2,22,929
Purba Bardhaman	2,09,805
Purba Medinipur	19,572
Bankura	6,533
Purulia	5,942
Kalimpong	2,407
Jhargram	1,240

■ Highest number of deletions was recorded in the **Muslim-majority Murshidabad** district, and the **Bangladesh-bordering North 24 Parganas** district

SOURCE: ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

were removed from the voter list under the SIR in the State till February 28. In addition, 60.06 lakh were put under adjudication; of these, 27.16 lakh, or 45%, remained excluded on Tuesday, according to data shared by the Chief Electro-

ral Officer of West Bengal. The highest number of such deletions was in Murshidabad, the district with the highest percentage of Muslim population in West Bengal. Of the 11.01 lakh names from the district which went for judicial

scrutiny over the past few weeks, over 4.55 lakh were excluded. North 24 Parganas, a district which borders Bangladesh and sends the highest numbers of MLAs to the Assembly, has registered deletion of about 3.25 lakh electors

under adjudication, followed by Malda, another Muslim-dominated district, with 2.39 lakh deletions.

Last chance

The fate of the 27 lakh excluded voters now lies with 19 appellate tribunals set up across the State, and people started thronging them even before the exclusion list was released. However, for this election where polling is held in on April 23 and 29, these voters have run out of chances to exercise their franchise.

On Monday, the Supreme Court rejected the West Bengal government's plea to delay the locking of the electoral rolls to give a last chance for the 27 lakh voters who did not pass judicial scrutiny. Of the 294 constituencies in the Assembly, 152 will go to the

polls in the first phase on April 23, and the remaining 142 seats in the second phase on April 29. The rolls for the first phase were locked on April 6, while the second phase rolls will be locked on April 9.

'Vote theft'

Terming it "vote theft", West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that a "particular community" had been targeted, in a reference to the high rate of deletions in Muslim-majority areas. "Votes of one particular community have been deleted by picking and choosing. Votes of Matuas and Rajbangshi community have been deleted," Ms. Banerjee said, while addressing a gathering at Habra in North 24 Parganas.

The Trinamool Congress chairperson has been urging people to cast their

votes against the BJP to "take revenge" for the deletion of voters' names from the electoral rolls, and a delegation of party MPs, led by Derek O'Brien, will visit the Election Commission in New Delhi on Wednesday.

BJP MLA Suwendu Adhikari, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, said illegal Bangladesh infiltrators would be removed from the electoral rolls.

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, who is contesting from Behram-pore in Murshidabad, urged the Chief Minister to approach the Supreme Court and the Election Commission to ensure that those removed from the electoral rolls during the adjudication process are still allowed to vote.

'HOW CAN POLLS BE FAIR?'

» PAGE 9

- **91 lakh names deleted** from West Bengal's electoral rolls since the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) began — a 12% shrink in the electorate.
- **91 लाख नाम** पश्चिम बंगाल की मतदाता सूची से हटाए गए — मतदाता संख्या में 12% की कमी।
- **27 lakh excluded voters** now face 19 appellate tribunals to contest their deletion before elections.
- **27 लाख बाहर किए गए मतदाता** अब 19 अपीलीय न्यायाधिकरणों के सामने अपना मामला रख सकते हैं।
- Highest deletions in **Murshidabad** (4.55 lakh) and **North 24 Parganas** (3.25 lakh) — both Muslim-majority/Bangladesh-bordering districts.
- सर्वाधिक विलोपन **मुर्शिदाबाद** (4.55 लाख) और **उत्तर 24 परगना** (3.25 lakh) में — दोनों मुस्लिम-बहुल/बांग्लादेश-सीमावर्ती जिले।
- Supreme Court rejected West Bengal govt's plea to delay locking of electoral rolls.
- सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने मतदाता सूची बंद करने में देरी की पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार की याचिका खारिज की।
- West Bengal Assembly elections are imminent (Phase 1: April 23, Phase 2: April 29).
- पश्चिम बंगाल विधानसभा चुनाव निकट हैं (चरण 1: 23 अप्रैल, चरण 2: 29 अप्रैल)।

- West Bengal was part of **Bengal Presidency** under British rule; the **Partition of Bengal (1905)** and later **Partition of India (1947)** created Muslim-majority East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).
- पश्चिम बंगाल ब्रिटिश शासन में **बंगाल प्रेसीडेंसी** का हिस्सा था; **बंगाल विभाजन (1905)** और **भारत विभाजन (1947)** ने मुस्लिम-बहुल पूर्वी पाकिस्तान (अब बांग्लादेश) बनाया।
- **1971 Bangladesh Liberation War** led to massive refugee influx into West Bengal — a historical root of the immigration issue.
- **1971 बांग्लादेश मुक्ति युद्ध** ने पश्चिम बंगाल में बड़े पैमाने पर शरणार्थी प्रवाह लाया — आब्रजन मुद्दे की ऐतिहासिक जड़।

Geography / भूगोल

- **Murshidabad:** Located on banks of **Hooghly River**, Muslim-majority district, shares border with **Bangladesh**.
- **मुर्शिदाबाद:** हुगली नदी के किनारे, मुस्लिम-बहुल जिला, **बांग्लादेश** से सीमा साझा करता है।
- **North 24 Parganas:** Borders Bangladesh; part of **Sundarbans delta** region; sends highest number of MLAs to assembly.
- **उत्तर 24 परगना:** बांग्लादेश से सीमा; **सुंदरबन डेल्टा** क्षेत्र; विधानसभा में सर्वाधिक MLA भेजने वाला।
- **Malda:** Borders Bangladesh and **Jharkhand**; known for **Malda mango** (GI tag); also Muslim-majority.
- **मालदा:** बांग्लादेश और **झारखंड** से सीमा; **मालदा आम** (GI टैग) के लिए प्रसिद्ध; मुस्लिम-बहुल।

West Bengal



Polity / राजव्यवस्था

- **Article 324:** ECI has superintendence, direction, and control of elections.
- **अनुच्छेद 324:** ECI के पास चुनावों का अधीक्षण, निर्देशन और नियंत्रण है।
- **Article 325:** No exclusion from electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste, or sex.
- **अनुच्छेद 325:** धर्म, जाति, नस्ल या लिंग के आधार पर मतदाता सूची से बहिष्करण नहीं।
- **Article 326:** Elections based on adult suffrage (18+ years).
- **अनुच्छेद 326:** वयस्क मताधिकार (18+ वर्ष) के आधार पर चुनाव।
- **Representation of the People Act, 1950:** Governs preparation of electoral rolls.
- **जन प्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1950:** मतदाता सूचियों की तैयारी को नियंत्रित करता है।
- **Appellate Tribunals:** Set up under electoral law to hear appeals of deleted voters.
- **अपीलीय न्यायाधिकरण:** हटाए गए मतदाताओं की अपील सुनने के लिए चुनावी कानून के तहत स्थापित।

Economy / अर्थव्यवस्था

- West Bengal's political stability directly impacts **investment climate** and industrial growth.
- पश्चिम बंगाल की राजनीतिक स्थिरता **निवेश माहौल** और औद्योगिक विकास को सीधे प्रभावित करती है।
- **Matuas and Rajbanshi communities** (mentioned as having votes deleted) are largely agricultural communities in WB.
- **मतुआ और राजवंशी समुदाय** (जिनके वोट हटाए बताए गए) मुख्यतः पश्चिम बंगाल में कृषि समुदाय हैं।

Consider the following statements regarding the Election Commission of India (ECI) and electoral rolls: भारत निर्वाचन आयोग (ECI) और मतदाता सूचियों के बारे में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार करें:

1. The Election Commission derives its authority to conduct elections from Article 324 of the Constitution.
2. Article 325 prohibits exclusion from electoral rolls on grounds of religion, race, caste, or sex.
3. The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls can only be conducted once every five years.
4. Appellate tribunals set up for voter exclusion grievances are permanent bodies under the ECI.

Iranians form human chains at power plants after Trump threat

State media claims 'more than 14 million people registered' to join after a campaign online and through SMS texts; people reportedly stand around key energy sites, bridges in Bushehr, Tabriz, Mashhad, Ahvaz; hashtag *janfada* trending in Iran

Agence France-Presse

TEHRAN

Iranians formed human chains to protect power plants on Tuesday after U.S. President Donald Trump's threats to strike energy infrastructure, according to images published by state media, as top officials said they were also prepared to sacrifice their lives.

After a campaign online and through SMS texts to sign up for the human chains nationwide, officials claimed that more than 14 million people had joined.

It was not immediately possible to verify that figure or how many people were taking part, although initial images showed do-



Broken dreams: Iranians rally during a memorial for those killed in Minab school strike, in Tehran on Tuesday. AFP

zens involved at each location.

The state-run *IRNA* news agency showed people forming a human chain "to support power plants" in the southern city of Bushehr, which is home to

Iran's nuclear power plant.

State television and the *Mehr* news agency showed dozens of people outside the main power station in the northern city of Tabriz, as well as at a plant in the northeastern city of Mash-

had. With U.S.-Israeli strikes also targeting bridges, people gathered on the main span over a river in the western city of Ahvaz, *Mehr* reported.

While the more than five-week war between the Islamic republic, and the United States and Israel has seen a whole echelon of the Iranian leadership killed, strikes on energy plants would mark a major escalation.

Iran Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, seen by some as the country's de-facto number one after the killing of Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini at the start of the war, published a screenshot of what was purportedly the registration system for the

human chains.

Saying he had registered his own name, he added: "Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf is ready to sacrifice his life for Iran."


The Persian word for self-sacrifice – *janfada* – became a trending hashtag on social media.


"More than 14 million proud Iranians have so far registered to sacrifice their lives to defend Iran. I too have been, am, and will remain ready to give my life for Iran," President Masoud Pezeshkian wrote on X on Tuesday.

Mr. Trump earlier warned "a whole civilisation will die" in Iran if the country did not heed his midnight deadline to open the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's nuclear program

 Nuclear power plant

 Plant under construction

 Research reactor

 Uranium enrichment plant

 Yellowcake

 Uranium mine



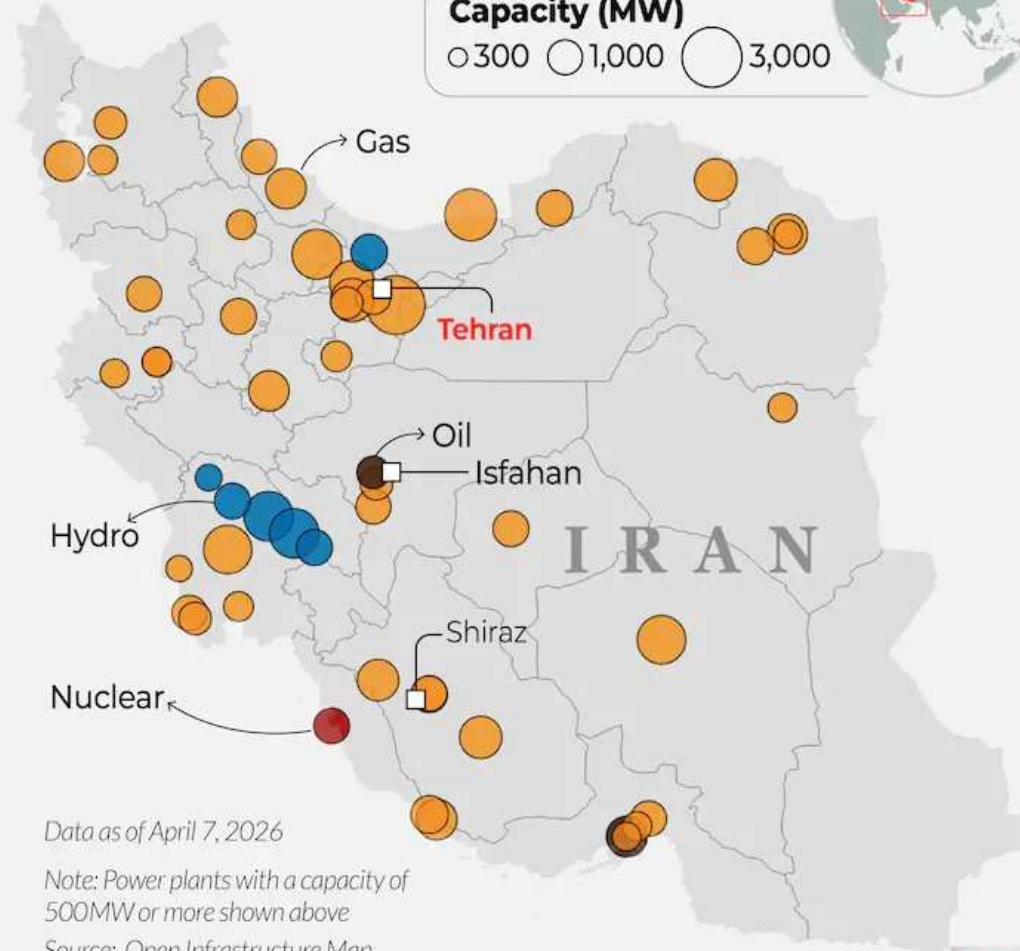
Where Iran Gets Its Power

Mapping Iran's electricity system via its large power plants



Capacity (MW)

○ 300 ○ 1,000 ○ 3,000



Data as of April 7, 2026

Note: Power plants with a capacity of 500MW or more shown above

Source: Open Infrastructure Map

Map: Piyush Aggarwal, Sarfaraz

● LIVE UPDATES

Trump's Iran Deadline LIVE: White House calls ceasefire 'victory for the US,' – 'Trump got Strait of Hormuz reopened'

Trump's Iran Deadline LIVE: Karoline Leavitt called the two-week ceasefire with Iran a 'victory for the United States'. She also said that Trump got the Strait of Hormuz reopened. 'Never underestimate President Trump's ability to successfully advance America's interests and broker peace.'

Ravi Hari

Updated • 8 Apr 2026, 08:31:43 AM IST



Advertisement

- Instant & secure payments
- Link any bank account
- Fund split and spend analytics
- With UPI Lite, enjoy fast payments without a PIN

*TnC Apply

Most Active Stocks

Yes Bank share price	18.14
03:57 PM 7 APR 2026	↓ -0.01 (-0.06%)
Suzlon Energy share price	41.53
03:58 PM 7 APR 2026	↓ -0.08 (-0.19%)
Kotak Mahindra Bank share price	362.70
03:45 PM 7 APR 2026	↑ 2.20 (0.61%)
Eternal share price	232.00
03:51 PM 7 APR 2026	↓ -0.25 (-0.11%)

Strait of Hormuz
World's #1 energy chokepoint

20% of global oil supply (~20 mb/d)
20% of global LNG trade (Qatar)
34 km wide at narrowest point
Iran to north, Oman to south

Trump ultimatum
8 PM ET, Apr 7 deadline

"Open Hormuz or face hell"
Threatened bridges + power plants
"Whole civilization will die tonight"
Iran gave 10-pt proposal → 2-wk ceasefire

US-Iran War & Hormuz Crisis
Op. Epic Fury · Feb 28, 2026
GS-2 IR · GS-3 Economy · GS-1 Geography

Iran response

IRGC declared strait closed Mar 4
21 confirmed ship attacks by Mar 12
Allowed China, Russia, "friendly" ships
Threatened to close Bab el-Mandeb too

India angle

50% of crude oil via Hor
Indian basket: \$69→\$113
Resumed Iran oil after 7
Refused US naval coalit.

Global energy shock

Brent crude peaked at \$126/barrel
Gulf: 9.1 mb/d output shut in (Apr)
US EIA: gas to peak \$4.30/gallon
Largest disruption since 1970s crisis

Intl. law & UPSC angles
War crimes · Geneva · UNCLOS

Striking civilian infra = war crime risk
UNCLOS: strait closure violates intl law
GS-2 IR · GS-3 Energy security · Ethics

Key players & diplomacy

Pakistan — key mediator (Sharif)
Israel — co-belligerent with US
UAE — no weaponising the strait
IAEA — nuclear accident warning

'Earthset' boulevard



The other side: An 'earthset', where earth dips beyond the lunar horizon, as seen from the Orion spacecraft of the Artemis II lunar flyby mission on Monday. The four astronauts on NASA's flyby mission on Monday marked the furthest humans have been from the planet. AFP

Supreme Court begins review of 2018 ruling on Sabarimala shrine

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

Justice B.V. Nagarathna, part of the Supreme Court Constitution Bench hearing a reference spurred by a 2018 judgment upholding the right of women of menstruating age to enter the Sabarimala shrine in Kerala, said on Tuesday that social ills cannot be branded and passed off as 'essential religious practices'.

The Union government said the legislature, not courts, drives reform in religion, if need be.

"If social evils are given a religious colour, then the courts can intervene to distinguish [between] the two," Justice Nagarathna said.



Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta said the Preamble to the Constitution champions liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship.

The exchange marked the first day of hearing of a reference to evolve a 'judi-

cial policy' for constitutional courts while dealing with questions of right to religious freedom enshrined in Article 25 and a denomination's privilege to manage its own religious affairs under Article 26 of the Constitution.

"How can the courts then examine the essentiality of religious practices of a denomination which does not otherwise offend public order, morality, and health?" Mr. Mehta asked.

The focal point of the reference is how far the courts can use their plenary powers to judicially review religious practices considered "essential or core" in the name of ushering in social reform.

The Centre argued whether the judges had the

expertise to decide if a ritual or a manner of devotion was merely superstition or an essential religious practice. "The essentiality of a religious practice may not fall within the domain of judicial review", Mr. Mehta said.

"Judges are not experts in science. Yet, courts are empowered by the Evidence Act to examine the opinions of scientific experts and become an expert of experts," Justice Joy-malya Bagchi observed.

Justice M.M. Sundresh intervened to note that "the difference here is science is based on logic and religion is based on belief".

RELATED REPORTS

» PAGE 2

Constitutional Articles

Art. 25 — Freedom of religion
Art. 26 — Manage religious affairs
Art. 14 — Right to equality

Essential Religious Practice Test

Is ban on women 'essential'?
Judicial review boundary
Superstition vs religion

Sabarimala Review

SC 2018 ruling revisited
GS-2 · Polity · Society

2018 Judgment

4:1 majority

Women 10-50 yrs denied entry
SC upheld right to enter
Art. 17 — Untouchability angle

Bigger Issue

Religion vs equality

Who reforms religion?
Legislature vs Judiciary
Plenary judicial power

Key Judges & Arguments

J. B.V. Nagarathna — courts can distinguish social evil
J. Joymalya Bagchi — evidence
SG Tushar Mehta — legislature

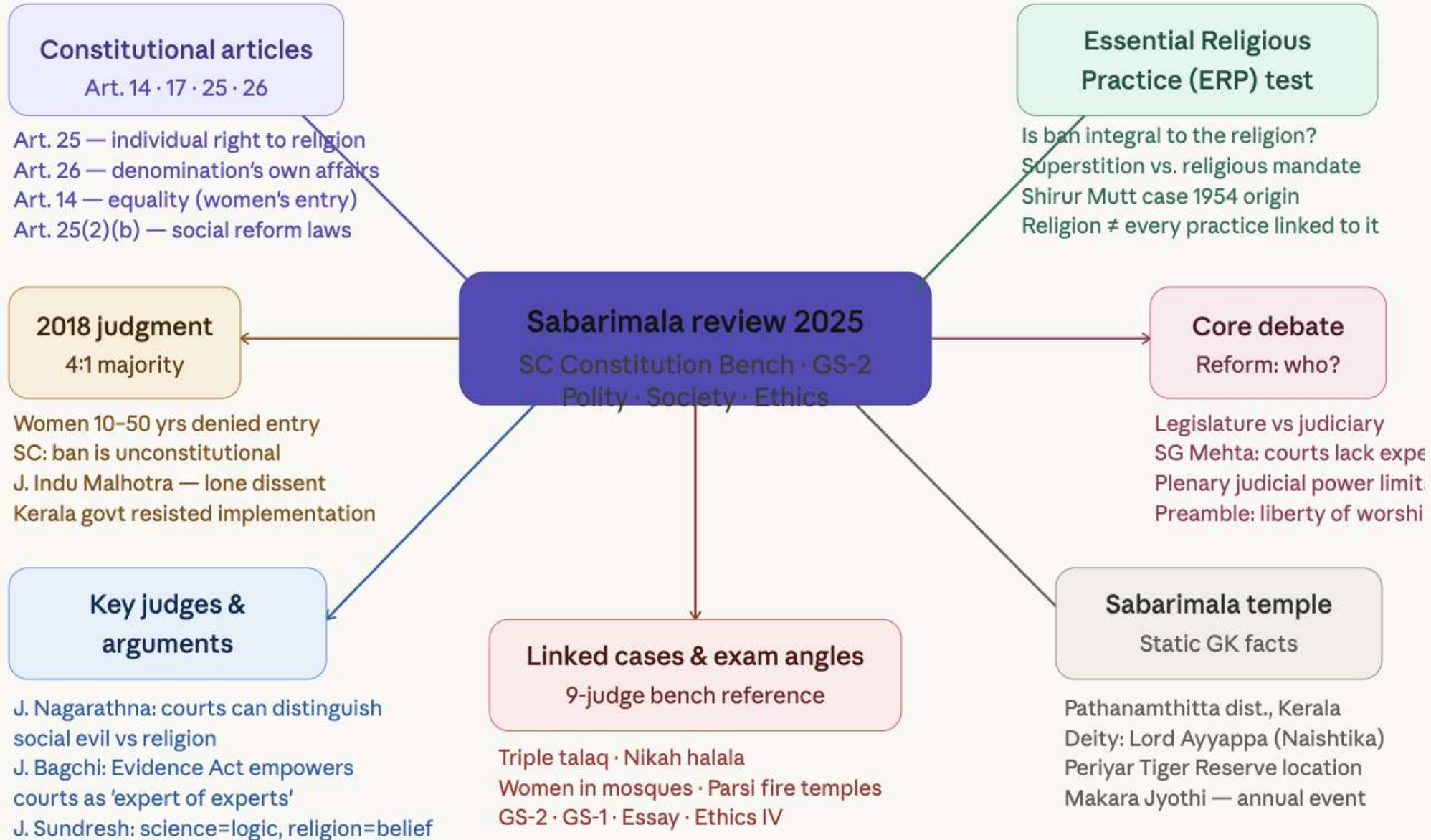
UPSC Angles

GS-2, Essay, Ethics

Judicial review limits
Rights vs personal law
Constitution Bench concept

Sabarimala Temple

Pathanamthitta, Kerala · Lord Ayyappa



EL NIÑO LIKELY TO SET IN DURING AUG-SEPT

Skymet Predicts Rain Deficit in India this Yr

Sees rainfall levels falling to 95% of LPA during sowing window in July

Our Bureau

New Delhi: India is expected to get below-normal monsoon rainfall in 2026 as the El Niño weather pattern would weigh on precipitation in the second half of the June-September season, said private weather forecaster Skymet, sparking concerns about crop output, consumption, and inflation.

Rainfall is expected to be 6% below normal or 94% of the Long Period Average (LPA) of around 817 mm for the four-month long season.

Rainfall in June is projected at 101% of LPA, falling to 95% in July, according to Skymet. In August, it would decline further to 92% of LPA, weakening to 89% in the subsequent month.

India's eastern and northeastern regions would get above-normal monsoon rains, though northern, western and



central parts of the country would experience below-normal rains, according to Skymet. Southern peninsula is expected to get normal rains.

El Niño is the periodic warming of waters in the central Pacific Ocean.

Projections could Get Revised ►► 14

El Niño mechanism
Central Pacific warming

Periodic warming of central Pacific
Weakens Walker Circulation
Reduces SW monsoon rainfall in India
ENSO = El Niño Southern Oscillation

LPA — Long Period Average

LPA = 817 mm (June-Sep average)
Below normal: below 90% of LPA
Normal: 96%-104% of LPA
2026 forecast: 94% of LPA

Rain deficit India 2026
Skymet forecast · El Niño factor
GS-1 · GS-3 · Geography · Economy

Month-wise forecast

June: 101% of LPA (normal)
July: 95% — critical sowing window
August: 92% (El Niño sets in)
September: 89% (weakest month)

Economic impact

Crop output falls — kharif
Food inflation rises
Rural consumption & dem
Power sector: hydro gene

Regional distribution

East & NE India — above normal
North, West, Central — below normal
Southern peninsula — normal
July = key kharif sowing window

UPSC exam angles
GS-1 Geography · GS-3 Economy

GS-1: Monsoon mechanism, ITCZ, ENSO
GS-3: Food security, inflation, kharif
Prelims: LPA, Walker Cell, La Niña

Agencies & forecasters

Skymet — private weather forecast
IMD — India Meteorological Dept.
IMD = official govt. forecast body
Source of LPA data used in article

Parameter	Details
Name	Skymet Weather
Founded	2003
Founder	Jatin Singh
Headquarters	Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India
Type	Private weather forecasting and agri-risk management company
Core Work	Weather forecasting, climate analytics, agriculture advisory
Special Focus	Monsoon prediction, crop insurance, weather risk solutions
Technology Used	Satellite data, weather models, AI/ML-based forecasting
Clients	Farmers, insurance companies, corporates, government agencies
Key Contribution	First private Indian company to issue monsoon forecasts
Role in Agriculture	Provides advisory for sowing, irrigation, and crop planning
Government Link	Works alongside India Meteorological Department (IMD) but is independent
Forecast Type	Seasonal (monsoon), short-term (daily), long-term climate outlook
Unique Feature	Uses high-resolution weather data + AI analytics for accuracy
Importance for Exams	Important in Monsoon prediction, agriculture economy, climate services



Tar Balls





Parameter	Details
Topic	Tar Balls (Marine Pollution)
Related Ministry	<u>Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change</u>
Definition	Small, dark, sticky lumps of weathered crude oil found in marine environments
Origin	Oil spills OR natural seepage of crude oil from ocean floor
Formation Process	Weathering of crude oil via evaporation, oxidation, microbial degradation
Physical Nature	Semi-solid or solid masses; size varies from tiny globules to large lumps
Transport Mechanism	Ocean currents and waves carry them from offshore to coast
Chemical Composition	Heavy metals, trace elements, persistent organic pollutants (POPs)
Toxic Nature	Highly toxic to marine life and ecosystems
Major Impact Area (India)	Western Coast (Gujarat to Goa)

Major Impact Area (India)	Western Coast (Gujarat to Goa)
Seasonal Link	High deposition during monsoon (April–September) due to strong currents
Impact on Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ingestion by seabirds, fish, turtles• Coating of feathers/shells → reduced mobility• Can cause death
Human & Economic Impact	Affects fisheries, tourism, coastal livelihoods
Recent Development	Draft rules released for monitoring, collection, and disposal
Regulatory Focus	Surveillance, inter-agency coordination, rapid response systems
Exam Importance	Environment + Pollution + Coastal management + Current Affairs

VN To Lam Becomes
Vietnam President



ASIA

CHINA

MYANMAR

LAOS

THAILAND

VIETNAM

CAMBODIA

*SOUTH
CHINA
SEA*

PHILIPPINES

*PACIFIC
OCEAN*

BRUNEI

MALAYSIA

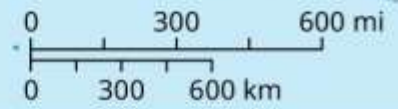
SINGAPORE

INDONESIA

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

EAST TIMOR (TIMOR-LESTE)

*INDIAN
OCEAN*








Parameter	Details
Country	<u>Vietnam</u>
Leader	<u>To Lam</u>
Position	President of Vietnam
Election Body	<u>National Assembly of Vietnam</u>
Election Type	Unanimous (495/495 votes)
Term Duration	5 years
Previous Role	General Secretary of <u>Communist Party of Vietnam</u>
Key Development	Consolidation of Party Chief + President roles
Political Shift	Move away from collective leadership model
System Type	One-party socialist state
Significance	Most powerful Vietnamese leader in decades
Governance Impact	Faster decision-making but reduced institutional checks
Economic Vision	Focus on science, technology, innovation, digital economy
Economic Concerns	Corruption risks, favoritism, asset bubbles
Foreign Policy	Continuation of "Bamboo Diplomacy" (balance between major powers)
Strategic Approach	Stability + pragmatic international relations



Capital	Hanoi 🌐 21°2′N 105°51′E
Largest city by municipal boundary	Da Nang 🌐 16°20′N 107°35′E
Largest city by urban population	Ho Chi Minh City 🌐 10°48′N 106°39′E
Official language	Vietnamese ^[1]
Ethnic groups (2019)	85.32% Viet (Kinh) 14.68% other ^[2]
Religion (2019)	86.32% no religion / folk 6.1% Catholicism 4.79% Buddhism 1.02% Hoahaoism 1% Protestantism 0.58% Caodaism 0.07% Islam 0.12% other ^[2] [a]
Demonyms	Vietnamese Viet (colloquial)
Government	Unitary communist state
• Party General Secretary ^[b] and President	Tô Lâm
• Prime Minister	Lê Minh Hưng
• National Assembly Chairman	Trần Thanh Mẫn

Formation	
• Văn Lang	7th century BC
• Âu Lạc	3rd century BC
• Han's annexation	111 BC
• Independence from China	939
• Regaining independence	1428
• Nguyễn's unification	1802
• Protectorate Treaty	25 August 1883
• Declaration of independence	2 September 1945
• North–South partition	21 July 1954
• End of Vietnam War	30 April 1975
• Reunification	2 July 1976
• Current constitution	28 November 2013 ^[c]
Area	
• Total	331,344.82 ^{[6][d]} km ² (127,932.95 sq mi) (66th)
• Water (%)	6.38
Population	
• 2025 estimate	102,300,000 ^[8] (16th)
• 2019 census	96,208,984 ^[2]
• Density	309/km ² (800.3/sq mi) (43th)
GDP (PPP)	2025 estimate
• Total	▲ \$1.786 trillion ^[9] (23rd)
• Per capita	▲ \$17,484 ^[9] (104th)

GDP (PPP)	2025 estimate
• Total	▲ \$1.786 trillion ^[9] (23rd)
• Per capita	▲ \$17,484 ^[9] (104th)
GDP (nominal)	2025 estimate
• Total	▲ \$490.970 billion ^[9] (33rd)
• Per capita	▲ \$4,806 ^[9] (119th)
Gini (2022)	▼ 36.1 ^[10] medium inequality
HDI (2023)	▲ 0.766 ^[11] high (93rd)
Currency	Vietnamese đồng (₫) (VND)
Time zone	UTC+07:00 (Vietnam Standard Time)

Parameter	Details	
War Name	<u>Vietnam War</u>	
Duration	1955 – 1975	
Region	Vietnam (Southeast Asia)	
Nature of War	Proxy war during <u>Cold War</u>	
Main Conflict	Communist North Vietnam vs Anti-communist South Vietnam	
North Vietnam Leader	<u>Ho Chi Minh</u>	
South Vietnam Support	<u>United States</u> and allies	
North Vietnam Support	<u>Soviet Union</u> & <u>China</u>	
Key Ideology	Communism vs Capitalism	
Major Tactics	Guerrilla warfare (Viet Cong), jungle warfare	
Important Event	Tet Offensive (1968)	
End of War	1975 – Fall of Saigon	

End of War	1975 – Fall of Saigon
Result	North Vietnam victory
Aftermath	Vietnam unified under communist rule
Capital after Unity	Hanoi
Human Impact	Millions killed; heavy civilian casualties
Environmental Impact	Use of Agent Orange (chemical defoliant)
US Involvement End	1973 (Paris Peace Accords)
Symbolic Event	Fall of Saigon → End of war

Casualties Table (Approximate Estimates)

Category	North Vietnam (incl. Viet Cong)	South Vietnam
Military Deaths	~1.1 million	~250,000
Civilian Deaths	~2 million	~2 million
Total Deaths	~3.1 million	~2.25 million

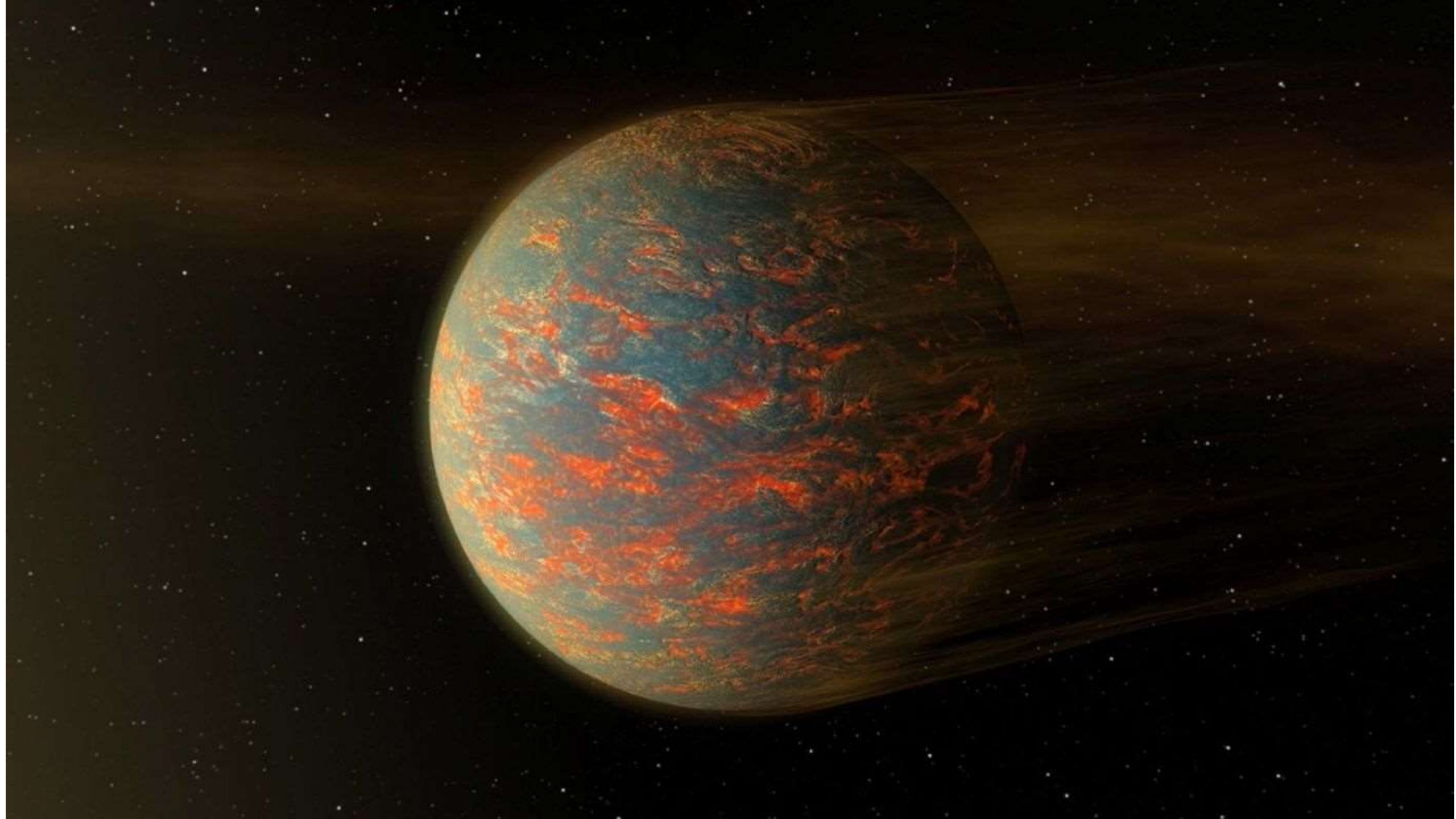
Other Major Casualties (For Context)

Country	Deaths
<u>United States</u>	~58,000
South Korea, Australia, Thailand (Allies)	~5,000+ combined

Factor	Explanation
Strong Ideology & Leadership	Led by <u>Ho Chi Minh</u> , North Vietnam had a clear goal: reunification under communism
Guerrilla Warfare Advantage	Viet Cong used hit-and-run tactics , tunnels, ambush → neutralized US technological superiority
Terrain Advantage	Dense jungles + local familiarity made it difficult for US forces to operate effectively
Local Support	North + Viet Cong had strong support among rural population in South Vietnam
Ho Chi Minh Trail	Supply network through Laos & Cambodia ensured continuous flow of weapons & troops
US Domestic Opposition	Massive protests in <u>United States</u> weakened political will
War of Attrition Strategy	North Vietnam was willing to accept heavy losses to exhaust US over time
Tet Offensive (1968)	Militarily costly but psychologically shattered US confidence
Limited US Objectives	US fought to contain communism , not total victory → less commitment
Withdrawal of US (1973)	After Paris Peace Accords, US troops left → South Vietnam weakened

A night-time satellite view of Earth, showing the illuminated continents of Africa, Europe, and Asia. The city lights are visible as bright yellow and white spots against the dark blue and black background of the oceans and night sky. The text "Two Earth-like Planets Discovered" is overlaid in white, centered horizontally across the middle of the image.

Two Earth-like Planets Discovered





LHS 3844b



Pi Mensae c



1

2

LHS 3844b^o



HD 21749b^o

HD 21749b



Pi Men c^o



Topic	Discovery of unusual planetary system
Type of Planets	Two Earth-like planets (Super-Earths)
Distance from Earth	~120 light-years
Scientific Field	<u>Astronomy</u>
Planet Category	Super-Earths (larger than Earth but smaller than gas giants)
Nature of Planets	Rocky composition, possibly layered interiors
Key Uniqueness	Two similar Earth-like planets in same system (rare)
Arrangement	Breaks traditional planetary formation patterns
Traditional Model	Rocky planets near star, gas giants far away
New Finding	Unusual/reversed or irregular planetary arrangement
Scientific Impact	Challenges existing planetary formation theories
Discovery Tools	<u>TESS</u> and <u>CHEOPS</u>
Detection Method	Transit method (dip in starlight when planet passes in front)
Importance	Helps understand planet formation and evolution
Comparison Value	Enables study of two similar planets under same conditions

Word of the day

Furtive:

marked by quiet, caution and secrecy

Synonyms: sneaky, stealthy, surreptitious

Usage: *He slipped a furtive look at the document on the table.*

Pronunciation: <https://newsth.live/mh5BOX/furtive>

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /'fɜ:tɪv/





Thank you 😊